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# GUIDE

TO

## NORTHERN ARCHÆOLOGY

BY THE

ROYAL SOCIETY OF NORTHERN ANTIQUARIES  
OF COPENHAGEN,

*Kongelige Nordiske Oldkyndighe Selskab*

EDITED FOR THE USE OF ENGLISH READERS

BY

THE RIGHT HONORABLE  
THE EARL OF ELLESMERE.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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**D**AN AND ANGUL, says the venerable historian, Saxo Grammaticus, WERE BROTHERS, an expression borrowed doubtless from a current popular tradition, and being, in reality but a figurative statement of the fact, that the Danish and English people are originally descended from the same ancestry. This fact, which, as is well known, is laid down by the old historians of England, receives familiar confirmation from the circumstance, that Angeln, whence the Angles, who gave their name to England, *Anglia*, emigrated, lies, and from time immemorial has lain, within the limits of Denmark proper, and that the Jutes, or Jotes, *Jutæ*, whose collateral descendants, under the name of Jutlanders, still inhabit a portion of continental Denmark, were, with the Angles and Saxons, one of the confederate tribes that, on the abandonment of Britain by the Romans, migrated thither, and contributed to found the Anglo-Saxon heptarchy. The accounts thus transmitted by the old writers are confirmed by the testimony of other literary remains and monuments of ancient times. The Anglo-Saxon if, in its original form, it be not, strictly speaking, a dead language, has undergone very considerable changes, but the many writings in it that have reached us, plainly show that it constituted an important link between the Old Teutonic and the Old-Northern, which anciently was spoken in Denmark, Norway and Sweden, but is now confined, as a living tongue, to the remote, and thinly populated island of Iceland, which was at one time the centre of its literature, and where has been preserved, up to the present day,

a large portion of its treasure of ancient Lays, Sagas, Laws, and other important philological monuments — a treasure of immense value to all the nations of the common stock. The heathen ancestors of the Angles, of the Saxons, and of the Scandinavians had the same religion; their common deities, Tyr, Wodan, Thur, Frea, etc. still survive, and are daily suggested to memory, in the ordinary appellations of the days of the week common to both the leading races. The same mythic beings, guð, gud, god; álfar, ælfe, ylfe, elves; vætter, wights; dvergar, dveorh, dveorgs, dwarfs; jötnar, jætter, jotnas, eótenas; tröll, trolde, trolles; þursar, thurser, þyrse; hel, hell, etc. were worshipped or feared, in their times of paganism, by both Anglo-Saxons and Scandinavians, and occur not only in their ancient poetical remains and other writings, but also in the language, the popular superstitions, traditions, and ballads of their still flourishing posterity. As both these leading races called their oldest progenitor, and also the first man, Ask or Æsc, so they likewise traced the family of their kings and princes to a common progenitor of divine lineage, Voda, Vodan, Wóden, Oden, Óðin, and likewise panegyrised in their poems the very same heroes, for example Volund, Weland; Volse, Wælse, Volsung; Giuke, Givica; Sigmund; Skiold, Scyld; Halfdan, Healfdene; Ubbe, Uffo, Offa; Wermund, Weremund; Jormunrek, Eormenric; Hrólfr, Rolf, Hróðwulf; Helge, Halga etc., and likewise the very same races of princes or people, for instance Skioldungs, Scyldings, Skylfings, Ylfings, Wylfings etc.

The Lays of the Anglo-Saxons and of the inhabitants of the North are constructed according to the very same metrical rules, with alliterative verse, and employ the same poetical language, all which evidently shews that not only the lays, but also the people of whom they are the remains, sprang from one and the same root. We have, however, scarcely any Anglo-Saxon poem of the heathen time that is purely pagan. The influence of Christianity is to be discerned in most of them; and therefore we cannot sufficiently regret that some very an-

cient Anglo-Saxon writings, containing chiefly prayers, invocations, and religious rites in honor of the heathen deities, and particularly of the Sun and Woden, which were discovered A. D. 980 in the ruins of a palace or temple, in the centre of the city of Verlamacester or Varlingacester (formerly Verolamium) were at the same time burned by command of a fanatic abbot. Fortunately something of the same kind has been saved in the remote North, in the two Eddas preserved in Iceland: these, as well as some other Old-Northern poems, and their poetical diction, elucidate in the clearest manner most of the obscure passages and phrases that occur in the ancient lays of the Anglo-Saxons, as these lays, on the other hand, afford important means for the explanation of similar Old-Northern relics. The same remark may be made with respect to the eldest laws of both the Anglo-Saxons and the inhabitants of the Scandinavian North, which mutually elucidate and explain each other. Along with the ancient language, the ancient law maintained itself longest in Iceland, where it is still, to a certain degree, the law of the land; and therefore it is easy to explain the striking phenomenon, that certain Icelandic legal terms and phrases give the best explanation of several obscure terms that are still in use in the English laws. This remark holds good, in a still higher degree, with regard to the dialect of the common people of England, particularly in the northern and eastern districts; for to the greater part of the peculiar words and expressions there occurring, complete counterparts can be shewn either in the Old-Northern and Icelandic (norrœna), or even in the modern Danish, Low-German, Southjutlandish, or Swedish. Some of the English idiotisms are to be recognized in the old Ballads, but these Ballads again correspond, in very many respects, with the ancient Danish, Swedish, Low-Saxon and Icelandic popular songs of the same kind, which can be proved to be of a very remote antiquity both in Denmark and Iceland. In like manner the very same proverbs — partly preserving the old alliteration — still live, as palpable relics

of paganism, in the colloquial dialect of the common people of Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Britain and Iceland, and the same remark may be applied to the popular manners, customs, diversions, superstitions etc. of these nations.

Angles, Jutes, and other inhabitants of the North took possession of, and settled in, not only parts of England, but also the Scotland of our days — at all events that portion of ancient Northumberland, which is now considered as part of the kingdom of Scotland. The connexion of Scandinavia with Caledonia, however, is undoubtedly much older than the conquest of England by the Anglo-Saxons. Before that event took place, the Scandinavians had possessed themselves of a considerable part of the lowlands of Scotland, where they probably were most generally known by the name of Picts. Agreeably to the most ancient heroic poems of the Scottish Highlands (in elucidating which much light is to be obtained from Northern sources) the descents of the Northmen in Scotland, before they got a firm footing there, were chiefly made from the Orkneys, which from time immemorial seem to have been inhabited by people of Scandinavian origin. A great portion of the Picts were for a length of time held in subjection by the monarchs of Northumberland, of Anglo-Saxon or Northern origin. Dr. John Jamieson's masterly philological investigations have proved, that the ancient Lowland Scotch — and generally speaking the colloquial dialect of Scotland — is more frequently to be traced to Northern, than to Anglo-Saxon sources. Mr. Robert Jamieson has proved a similar result, in respect to the remarkable affinity both of language and poetry, which prevails between the Scottish and Danish Ballads.

It would also appear that people of Northern or Germanic origin had, at a very early period, settled in certain parts of the maritime districts of Ireland, but concerning this we can only form loose conjectures. It is however well known, that in the same way as the Danes (together with the Norwegians and other Scandinavians) especially after the 8<sup>th</sup> century, made

frequent descents in Britain, and at last subdued, and for a considerable time held under subjection, all England together with a considerable part of Scotland, so they also made similar descents in Ireland, where, under the name of Ostmanns, they in the 9<sup>th</sup> century founded flourishing kingdoms, over which chieftains of their blood royal long held dominion, and where their posterity, moreover, retained the old national name down to the latter part of the middle ages, and even later. At, or after the conquest, they no doubt in a great measure became amalgamated with the English portion of the inhabitants; still however it will not appear surprising if among that population, in its present state — with special reference to the lower classes — we should frequently meet with peculiar words, sayings, popular customs and superstitions, which clearly point to a Northern origin.

In addition to this important influence, which Northern conquest and colonization exerted on the people of Britain and Ireland, and on their posterity living at this day, we must also take into consideration the effects of the frequent visits subsequently made, during the middle ages, by Northern navigators, whether in the character of warriors, vikings, or merchants. These expeditions gave rise to many connexions between the respective countries and their inhabitants. A consequence of these connexions was, that natives of Britain and Ireland frequently visited, and sometimes settled in the countries of the North, whither they also came occasionally as prisoners of war, some of whom were afterwards set at liberty. Among other things we know, with regard to Iceland in particular, that many natives of Scotland and Ireland were among its earliest inhabitants. This information we have from an old history of the whole settlement of that island, called the *Landnámabók*, compiled about the year 1100, and continued in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. It is in this way that many Icelanders, and among others the celebrated sculptor Thorvaldsen, are still able to deduce their descent, in uninterrupted succession, from natives of Bri-

tain or Ireland, some of them of princely lineage, who had settled in Iceland as far back as the times of paganism.

The greatest and most important reaction, which the inhabitants of Britain exerted on the North, was that which manifested itself at the introduction or diffusion of Christianity, in the countries inhabited by natives of Scandinavian origin. Anglo-Saxon missionaries converted a great portion of the continental Saxons and of the Frisians, and, to the best of our knowledge, it was they who first scattered abroad the seeds of Christianity among the Danes. It is true, the Germans have the merit of Denmark's first formal transition to Christianity, but its general diffusion among the people, must, without doubt, be ascribed to that intimate acquaintance with its nature and institutions, which the Danes, chiefly during the reign of Canute the Great, acquired by means of their dominion and sojourn in England. On this occasion many British missionaries — monks, priests, and prelates — came to Denmark, and laboured faithfully in their vocation, not confining their exertions to that country alone, but occasionally extending them over the whole Scandinavian North. Next to Canute, the Englishman William (who was first his chancellor and chaplain, but afterwards — in the reign of his nephew Svein — bishop of Roeskilde) may be said to have taken the lead in conducting the great work. Svein governed the kingdom, and William the church, during the entire period of 30 years, and both died, nearly on the same day, in the year 1074. The Cathedral of Roeskilde — to this day one of Denmark's noblest architectural ornaments — was first built by them, though not entirely completed until a succeeding age. It was from *England* that Norway received the first germ of Christianity. It was *there* that 'Hacon, the first christian king of Norway, commenced and finished his education, during the period from 937 to 963, though he failed in his effort to establish his own faith among his subjects. His brother Eric also, whom he had driven from the throne, embraced the Christian faith, and died as ruler of Northumberland about 952.

It was reserved for the insignificant islets of Scilly to kindle for Norway that light, which was thence to be diffused over the remotest North. The expatriated Norwegian prince and sea-king, Olaf Tryggvason, known in the history of England by the name of Anlaf, received baptism in these isles in 993; three years after that he overran all Norway, and in four more, or precisely at the completion of the first millennium after the birth of Christ, he introduced Christianity not only there, but also in Iceland, where, however, some British and Irish Christians had previously lived and labored; he also introduced it into the Feroe isles and into the remote Greenland. From England Olaf took along with him, in addition to other clergymen, his chief court priest and bishop Sigvard, or Sigurd (also called Sigfred, and John, or Johannes), who not only contributed much to the conversion of Norway, but also of Sweden. For, as early as the year 1000, he converted and baptized his sovereign's brother-in-law, Rognvald Ulfson, the ruler of West-Gothland; and subsequently, after the death of Olaf Tryggvason, he converted Olaf Ericson, king of Sweden, about the year 1008, and at that period and afterwards many other Swedes. The bishop Grimkel, or Grimketel who, along with king Olaf Haraldson († 1030) completed the conversion of Norway, and promulgated the first ecclesiastical law for it and for Iceland, was Sigurd's nephew and also an Englishman.

After all that has now been adduced, it will not be difficult to conceive, what we moreover find is in reality the fact, that the Scandinavian Antiquities, both those belonging to the ancient heathen period, and those of the earliest Christian times, have a great resemblance to the British and Irish, so that, when accurately examined and described, they mutually explain and elucidate each other. This for example is the case with the pagan stone circles, stone altars, barrows, etc. The most ancient of such British erections are generally ascribed to the Druids, but it is very possible that these sages of the olden time had more in common with the Drutts, or Drotts, of the

North, than a mere similarity of name, or than the rearing of such monuments. The stone erections in the Scottish Orkney and Shetland isles shew themselves to be purely Northern, or reared by people of decidedly Northern extraction.

Weapons and implements of stone, when in general use, are justly considered as belonging to the uneducated infancy of a people, and as testifying the remote antiquity of the burial places where they are most frequently found. A great number of these remarkable antiquities have been found both in Great-Britain and Ireland and in Scandinavia.

What next solicits our attention is the most ancient of the Runes, and particularly that class of them, which we are now certain was employed, in a very remote antiquity, both in Scandinavia and in Great Britain, viz., the Anglo-Saxon, as they have been called. With us in the North they were generally considered as belonging to the latest kind of Runes; but in more recent times, since our attention has been especially directed to them, they have been found, *in Denmark*, on the celebrated ancient goldhorns, also on stones and ornaments in pagan barrows; *in Norway* on stone monuments and on flat stones placed over urns containing the ashes of burned bodies; and *in Sweden* on the most ancient stone weapons, on combs of bone, and on large Runic stones. Besides, there have been frequently discovered throughout Scandinavia Bracteates of gold, on which Runic characters, particularly of that sort, frequently occur. Such kinds of Runic inscriptions are occasionally found regularly legible in Great Britain, particularly in England.

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It has been the wish of the ROYAL SOCIETY OF NORTHERN ANTIQUARIES, when its means should admit of it, to publish a collection, as complete as possible, of the Scandinavian sources of the early history of Great-Britain and Ireland, in a separate work to form a companion to the two other works already undertaken by the Society,



**viz. ANTIQUITATES AMERICANÆ and ANTIQUITÉS RUSSES ET ORIENTALES**, whereof the former appeared in 1837, and the latter is in an advanced state of preparation and the printing of it commenced in 1847. The importance of a similar collection of **ANTIQUITATES BRITANNICÆ ET HIBERNICÆ** must be obvious, and it will be found of still greater importance now that access to the study of the ancient MSS in the original language will be considerably facilitated by the publication of a Dictionary of the Old-Northern or ancient Icelandic language on which an eminent English philologist has been for several years assiduously employed, and which is now drawing near its completion. It is not in our power to specify accurately all that such a work ought to contain; and we will therefore here merely state the following as forming a portion of its contents: a, **JATVARÐAR SAGA ENS HELGA**, or a history of the canonized king Edward surnamed the Confessor. b, **THE SAGAS OF THE ARCHBISHOPS OF CANTERBURY, DUNSTAN, THOMAS, AND ANSELM**; none of these have hitherto been published. c, **ORKNEYINGA SAGA**, or the history of the Orkney and Shetland Isles, and partly of Scotland, from A. D. 865 to 1231; of this remarkable work there is only one edition, Copenhagen 1780, chiefly printed from a modern paper manuscript, and by no means from the celebrated *Codex Flateyensis*, written on parchment in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, which has not at all been used or consulted in its publication; this codex ought naturally to form the basis of a new edition and be collated with the other codices. d, **SAGA MAGNUS EYIA-EARLS ENS HELGA**, containing a minute account of the life of the earl Magnus Erlendson, who died in 1110 and was afterwards canonized and generally worshipped in Northern Britain and Scandinavia; for a new edition of this saga, as also for the other articles the better parchment MSS ought to be consulted; these two last mentioned sagas give a very luminous description of the state of political society and manners in the 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> centuries in the Scottish isles, and of Scotland itself, particularly in as far

as regards the districts which had been inhabited or subdued by people of Scandinavian origin, from whom the present inhabitants of the Orkneys, Shetland and Caithness etc. chiefly descend. The life of Magnus was written in 1130, and the above mentioned general history of the Orkneys was compiled, doubtless in part from much more ancient writings, about 1240; these two works are therefore considerably older than that of any native Scottish historian. e, An account of HELGE and ULF inhabitants of the Orkneys from an ancient manuscript written on skin. Extracts from ICELANDIC HISTORICAL WORKS of the middle ages relating to the history of England, Scotland and Ireland, viz. from the following important works: f, SNORRE STURLASON'S celebrated HEIMSKRÍNGLA or SAGAS OF THE KINGS OF NORWAY; g, the LANDNÁMABÓK OF ICELAND, called also LIBER ORIGINUM ISLANDIÆ, containing the history of the earliest colony and colonists in Iceland, those portions of it which relate to natives of Britain or Ireland, who during the 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> centuries had established themselves in Iceland. h, EXTRACTS FROM MANY OTHER SAGAS AND ANNALS of the kings of NORWAY and DENMARK, also of Icelandic warriors, scalds, etc., and other distinguished men, who during the middle ages have had any connexion with England, Scotland or Ireland. i, Extracts from the ancient HISTORIANS and CHRONICLES of DENMARK and SWEDEN; also chronological annotations. k, REMARKABLE DIPLOMAS of the middle ages issued in the Orkney or Shetland isles, or in Iceland, Norway, Sweden or Denmark, having reference to Britain or Ireland, of which a great part have not hitherto been published. l, NORTHERN RUNES, inscriptions relating to the expeditions of the Northmen to the British islands, or which in any way concern those countries or their inhabitants.

The Icelandic or Old-Northern text ought to be accompanied by a correct translation, and the whole elucidated both by philological and historical remarks and explanations, and with geographical and historical disquisitions. A work of this description ought likewise to be furnished with one or more

maps of Britain and Ireland and the smaller isles appertaining to them, furnished with the ancient Scandinavian names of places, districts, rivers etc.; also with Facsimiles to serve as specimens of the oldest MSS on skin of the most important historical documents. Such a work cannot well be much longer postponed, in as much as the MSS, besides being liable to perish from accidents, are daily becoming more and more faint, or mouldering away from age, so that they incur the risk of soon becoming illegible and unavailable for the purpose of a correct publication.

When a greater degree of attention shall be bestowed in the British Islands on the undertakings of the Society and a greater degree of interest awakened for the matter in question, it is to be expected that the Society will thereby be enabled to realize such a plan, to which end it is hoped that the present Guide to Northern Archæology will also contribute its share.

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Respecting the appellation chosen for the language and literature, namely that of OLD-NORTHERN, we deem it incumbent on us to give some further explanation. The Icelandic was in ancient times the general language spoken all over the North, and the Icelandic literature is the common property of the entire North. The Eddas, and, in many instances, the Sagas, or at least the first groundwork of these, were unquestionably composed originally in Denmark and Sweden, and a good many of them, as may be proved, also in Norway, where the language was longest preserved unaltered. We are therefore fully justified in adopting the appellation proposed by Rask and several other Northern philologists, and which has been used by the Society in their works. The Northmen all understood one another, nor is there any allusion made in the ancient records to the necessity of employing an interpreter. The Icelandic scalds recited their difficult *drapas* at all the Northern courts, as well in Sweden and Denmark as in Norway, where they were understood, and the courtiers learned them by heart; nay the Danish king Waldemar the victorious used even to occupy

himself in investigating the Icelandic (or Danish) alphabetical system, and Olaf Hvitaskald, the Icelander, learned of him various branches of scholarship (*fræði*) and many remarkable narratives (*úgætligar frásagnir*). The ancient Danish and Swedish names of persons and places, as well as the Norwegian, are found to be mainly composed of words altogether Icelandic, as is the case to this day all over the North with many dialectical words, which have been derived from the ancient language. The inscriptions on runic stones still preserved in all parts of Norway and Denmark, as well as in Sweden, erected by one friend or kinsman to the memory of another, are all (making allowance for a few trifling deviations of dialect) composed in the language of the sagas, to which approximates, with unmistakable marks of immediate descent, the language of the earliest Swedish and Danish laws, not to mention the Norwegian, the language of which is identical with that of the sagas. The Icelanders called their own language at random, sometimes (and most generally, we may presume, in the earliest period) *DÖNSK TÚNGA* (*Danish*), and frequently also *NORRÆNA* (*Norse*). Snorre Sturlason says in the preface to his history of the kings of Norway, that he in that book recorded ancient traditions of such chieftans as had ruled in the countries of the North (particularly Norway and Sweden), and who spoke the Danish language (*ok á danska tungu hafa mælt*). As well in the more recent ICELANDIC CODE, *Jónsbók* of 1281, as in the elder, *Grágás* of 1118, especially, the appellation *DÖNSK TÚNGA* occurs as applied to the common language of the Icelanders and Northmen. In the book on the forms of judicial procedure, we find the following: „No one can be appointed a juryman (in Iceland), who has not in his childhood learned to speak Danish (*er eigi hefir mál numit í barnæsku á danska tungu*), unless he has been three years or longer in Iceland.” Likewise in the book on prosecution for homicide: „If a foreigner be slain here in the country (Iceland), and such foreigner be a Dane, a Swede,

or a Norwegian, from the realms of the three kings where our language is (*er vār túnga er*), the kinsmen of such foreigner aforesaid, if he have any in the country, may institute an action; but if his language be any other than Danish (*en af öllum túngum öðrun en af danskri túngu*), the circumstance of consanguinity shall not confer a right to prosecute for homicide, except in the case of a father, or son, or brother, and to such only in case they are previously known here." Odd the monk relates that Olaf Tryggvason christianized Norway, Hialtland (Shetland), the Orkneys, the Feroe Isles, Iceland and Greenland, in which undertaking, however, there were difficulties to be overcome, notably in consequence of the want of teachers, and their inability to express themselves in the Danish language.

But it is not merely for the Scandinavian North properly so called, that the language and literature possess a national significance, which, throughout a certain period, extends to Russia, as also to Germany and to France (where Norman historians, of a date anterior to the Icelandic sagas, expressly call the language of Normandy, *DANISH*, *dacisca*), but doubtless in a still greater degree to the British Islands, where the language was anciently the same in a great measure with that of Scandinavia, in proof of which we may quote the following passage (which, however, must be understood with some limitation) from the saga of Gunnlaug Ormstunga and Rafn the Bard: "King Ethelred Jatgeirsson ruled then in England; he resided that winter (1006) in London; the language in England was at that time the same as in Denmark and Norway (*ein var þá túnga í Englandi sem í Danmörku ok Noregi*); but when William the Bastard took possession of the country, the language underwent a change, and from that time the Roman (*valska*) was introduced." Gunnlaug went and paid his duty to the king, who enquired of him whence he came. This he told the king, adding that he was come thither because he had composed a poem about the king, which he was desirous that king Ethelred should hear. His request was granted; upon which Gunnlaug recited his poem.

The king remunerated him and made him one of his body guard. Even down to the latter half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the language in some parts of England so much resembled the Icelandic that Olaf Hvitaskald could say of the English and Icelanders: „we are of one tongue (*vær erum einnar tungu*), although either that tongue has become greatly changed with one of us, or it has with both in some degree deviated from what it originally was”.

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It must be observed here that the various heads of the present Guide to Northern Archæology were written in the original by the undermentioned Fellows of the Society: the section on the extent and importance of Old-Northern literature by N. M. Petersen; the view of the monuments and antiquities of the early times of the North by C. J. Thomsen, some sections being also furthermore elaborated by the other Members of the Society's Archæological Committee, Finn Magnussen and Charles C. Rafn. In regard to the annexed view of the undertakings of the Society it has been completed up to the present time partly from the annual reports in the *Mémoires des Antiquaires du Nord*, and in the Archæological Journal of the Society, partly also from the notices of American authors on the Ante-Columbian works published by the Society. The introduction has been partly borrowed from a report presented in 1836 by the Society to its British and American Members, but which seems of a nature suited to a far more extensive circulation.

The work having come under my notice as a Member of the Society, I thought that both for the value of the information it contains, and as illustrating the systematic and intelligent zeal with which the study of antiquities has been pursued in Denmark it would be most desirable to procure its circulation in the language of England and the United States. With this view I commenced the translation, and arriving at a period of my labour when it became necessary to append the engraved illustrations and finding that the latter could be furnished from the original blocks, I found it expedient to make over the further progress of the work to the hands, which have since completed it.

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## EXTENT AND IMPORTANCE OF ANCIENT NORTHERN LITERATURE.

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**T**HE most perfect and enduring form in which the memorabilia of the present day can be preserved for posterity is that of written documents; the facility with which these are now prepared and multiplied in copies by the assistance of the press, makes the information they embody imperishable. In ancient times and through the middle ages, the difficulty was greater; written documents were less diffused, costlier, the property rather of individuals than of the people at large, and least of all, of the humbler classes. We may therefore assume that what has been preserved belonged to the choicer productions of its age; that it was something on which the most distinguished and enlightened men of its time and country placed a high value, and which must therefore assist us to the knowledge, not indeed of all the remarkable events of past ages, but still of their most important results.

That which in the earliest times was preserved only by tradition, very frequently in a poetical shape, came by degrees to be committed to writing, either in its original traditionary poetical form, or altered by later additions to prose. If therefore we bestow the necessary attention on the form as well as the matter, we may attain the means of deciding which of the accounts that have come down to us are the older and more trustworthy, and which are later and more disfigured by a

multiform tradition. But in order to judge by this process of a body of literature which may be considered as having been long ago closed, a complete view of all its products is essential. To explain the properties of a stream which varies in its analysis in different stages of its progress, we must pursue it back to all its channels and feeders. Thus it is with the literature of a people. It is only thus that we can arrive at a comparison embracing due reference to form and substance, style and treatment; it is only thus that enquiry can separate the weighty from the unimportant, the true from the false, the noble from the trivial, and apply the knowledge which lies concealed in the treasures of a nearer or more remote antiquity to the present time, which we must admit owes its foundation and origin to the past. This idea is at the bottom of the resolution of the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries, by degrees to edit all the historical writings and narratives extant in the Old Icelandic, even those which verge upon or merge into the dominion of fable; for only thus shall we be in condition to afford a distinct and perfect exposition of the actions of our forefathers, of their social institutions and their physical and intellectual circumstances.

The significance and importance of the Old Northern literature can only be fully recognized on a consideration of its relations to the culture of modern Europe. The aims to which that culture tends, the means by which it works, and the civilization it has diffused we may assume as sufficiently known; all our readers are probably agreed that it is the choicest yet known among men, that it is distinguished from all others by continuous progress, the result of awakened thought, which is never satisfied and incessantly employed in speculation. This ever forward march of thought produces a perpetual advance in the life of all the states which it pervades, an unbroken procession of changes and improvements, which concern not only the outer forms and greater relations of states, but penetrate into the simplest and apparently most insignificant details. This



development of humanity has been mainly pursued through two channels: this unrest of the mind, so beneficial in its operations, we owe first and most signally to the ancient classical literature, that of Greece and Rome; by this it has been awakened, by this it has been nourished, by this Christianity itself has been urged forwards. The study of the Greek and Latin languages has given birth to the modern philology. By the example of the classical historians modern history has attained its eminence, of which fact there can be but one opinion among men of scientific acquirement; none but the uninstructed and superficial observer would ascribe the movement of a machine to the great external and visible wheels without taking into account the inner principle of motion. But with the remains of the old classical literature the moderns have moreover combined a new spirit of intellectual activity, sprung indeed from an ancient root, but which by degrees has expanded into a new tree with another stem and bearing other fruit. The knowledge of the old time embraced man, that of our time nature at large. The special subjects of the labours of antiquity were mythology, language, history, as also philosophy, or in other words the history of man; what in modern times has been added to these is the knowledge of the world in all its departments, or in general terms the history of nature. The latter could not have sprung into existence without the former, no La Place without an Euclid, but the later development of knowledge has placed such a distance between the two, that they may be considered as independent of each other. Both together complete the culture of the human intellect. If we enquire under which of these two modes of intellectual activity the Old Northern literature is to be classed, the natural answer must be, under that of the olden time. It contains, like the Greek and Roman, scarcely any other element than the religious, the historical and the linguistic; the philosophical is wanting. To require more from it than in virtue of its nature it could afford, would be unreasonable. Its importance is commensurate with the influence

which these elements can be proved to exercise on the present. The special subject for our consideration is the interest which the written remains of Icelandic literature can present for mankind in general and the inhabitants of the North in particular.

Under the term religious element, in so far as it is meant to be distinguished from the purely historical, we understand the remains which we possess of the doctrine of Odin, which before the establishment of Christianity pervaded the whole North. They are contained in the EDDAS, the older, or *Sæmund's Edda*, and the younger, or *Snorre's Edda*, each so called from the name of its respective compiler. They are distinguished from each other in this respect, that the older contains elements more ancient than the Christian æra of the North, poems of pagan birth, of which, however, fragments only are preserved; the younger on the other hand exhibits narratives founded on the other, and filled with verses extracted from it, which however have been committed to writing at a period subsequent to Christianity, and have been preserved by learned individuals of such later time as memorials of the past. Not seldom, for this reason, they exhibit and dwell upon childish conceptions and distorted features of the old belief. In this collection of traditions are to be found recollections, for the most part imperfect, of all kinds of mythological doctrines, which sometimes are jumbled confusedly together, and occasionally as an aid to memory are put into a metrical form, somewhat on the principle of the *propria quæ maribus* of our Latin grammar. It is obvious enough that the first collection is the more valuable; and the later principally worth attention in so far as it completes and assists the comprehension of the former.

The question might be asked, what is the use of these old books? but it would be after all merely commensurate with the question, what is the use of mythological studies in general? What have men now living to do with the belief of their fathers? To the enquiry, however, in the present case, we are attracted by the apparent obscurity of these ancient monuments. Much

as men have thought, enquired, and written, and still daily write upon them, they appear not as yet to have arrived at any satisfactory result, and almost every fresh writer starts fresh views upon the subject. Among such systems may be enumerated: an historical one, according to which the gods were once men, who conferred benefits on their cotemporaries, and, as some hold, who falsely gave themselves out for gods, and in either case were honored as such after death; a geographical system, according to which the superhuman beings of whom mythology speaks, were once actual nations upon the earth, and the myths are therefore records of events which occurred in connexion with alliances or wars between these nations; an astronomical system, according to which the myths embodied ancient theories of the world, its creation, and the changes of the heavenly bodies, with all the relations of such to the life of man, clad in the mystic form of fable, from which, if we are indefatigable in the enquiry, the leading ideas may be still unravelled; a physical system, which holds that in the myth the greater features of change in nature were not so much contemplated, as the connexion between its individual components, and their strife and conflict; finally, an allegorizing system, either considering the gods as personifications, sometimes of the conceptions and feelings of men, sometimes of nature at large, or else considering neither man in general, nor the Northman in particular as the subject of personification, but, on the contrary, the history of the world, and even the character and qualities of the remotest nations. Among these systems, the ancient Northmen themselves have by particular expressions and comparisons originated the historico-geographical and the astronomico-physical, which have since been adopted anew and developed by Danish writers; it is easy however to conclude that these can only hold good in certain instances, and are by no means of universal application. Some writers have pushed the physical theory so far as to admit the supposition of a chemical knowledge of the elements, of electricity etc., which would

invest our in this respect uninstructed ancestors with an intuition of the discoveries of the subtlest geniuses of our time, a supposition to which we cannot by any means give our assent. The universal-history theory, however, can as little be sustained, in as much as it attributes to the ancients an ethnographical grasp of their subject, which was not compatible with their circumstances; and no explanation can be received as generally valid, which lies and must lie beyond the sphere of their conceptions and knowledge; every other is but a new and poetical treatment of the Edda, the value of which it is not our business now to discuss, when we wish to speak of the ancients themselves, and not of the manner and degree in which their conceptions have been altered and, if you will, improved upon. In order to explain the Edda it is beyond doubt essential to extract its spirit and essence and consider it with reference to itself; we can only thus discuss its value and its importance as a link in the chain of human knowledge. We shall then find that that work, like every other body of mythology, contains the conceptions of the Ancients, with respect to God, man and nature, and the mutual relations of each expressed in the symbolical style of thought and language peculiar to antiquity. The mode and form of this expression are of consequence as throwing light upon the origin and affinity of nations. Every people on earth has, for instance, asked itself the questions: how did the world begin? and how will it cease to be? The manner in which these questions are answered, is in the main ideas the same, but differs greatly in particulars. Comparison leads us to discover what nations entertained the most similar conceptions, and thence we conclude that these nations were mutually related. We have made considerable advances in this investigation, but it cannot yet be considered as completed. Every nation conceives the phenomena of nature to be the results of godlike agencies. We enquire, for example, what nation has represented lightning and its concomitants under the aspect of the thunder god Thor of the Northmen? what nation

has represented the subterranean power of fire and its effects under the form of the freakish fire deity Loke? Every nation has imagined to itself a power superior to the gods whose agency is limited to this nether world of ours; we enquire, what was the conception of the Northmen as to this supreme, eternal fate, from whose will every thing was dependent, and with what other nations did they hold their conception, be it what it might, in common? Every nation holds for certain that the world will one day perish; but what nation has held precisely the opinion that the gods themselves will perish with it? and what is it which is destined to survive the world? These and many similar questions are suggested by the consideration of the Northern mythology, and their answer will not only throw a clear light on the origin of the Northern nations and their relationship to others, but will enable us to penetrate at the same time into the spirit of antiquity; we shall see the ideas through the corporeal integuments in which they are arrayed. From these ideas, when exhibited in their integrity and no longer floating like mist before our sight, we shall be able to draw general conclusions as to the conceptions of our ancestors, their notions of God and the universe, of good and evil, virtue and vice; we shall moreover be able to trace the course of certain superstitions still extant back to their source, and in this manner to further that knowledge of the former state of the northern races, which is essential to a thorough knowledge of them as they are. Even if learned men have occasionally in their investigations strayed into by paths of error, their very failures will serve to make truth the more conspicuous; and no inquiry into the obscure meaning of the Eddas can be thought useless by those who reflect that in them are deposited the most essential and important notions of the people. It must be considered as an inestimable advantage for the North, that so many of these productions have been there preserved, while the analogous works which certainly once existed in Germany have almost entirely perished, so that the Icelandic lite-

rature in this respect serves to illustrate not only the oldest religious tenets of our own race, but also those of the Germanic.

Besides the strictly mythical songs the older Edda contains a succession of historical poems almost uninterrupted in connexion, forming an heroic poem, a Northern counterpart to the Homeric poems of the Greeks. Whoso covets a conception of the vigour and greatness of former times, will do well to read these. They have not the glow of the South, but they rivet attention; they consist not of rounded verses, which flow like streams in varied directions between flowery margins, but they stand up frozen into a stern fixity, like icebergs, rising into infinite space, while forms the most monstrous and events the most terrible that human imagination can suggest, are the accompaniments of their base. If we read these poems in the recent versions of them by Grundtvig and La Motte Fouqué, we may form a notion of the qualities of the sublime and terrible which they exhibit; but these attributes are even more conspicuous in a simple translation executed by Finn Magnusson, whose object has been to render them as literally as possible, rejecting all adventitious aid from poesy. To render them in another language at once with the original simplicity and poetic beauty which they unite in their own is a task for none but a poet of the highest order.

After the Eddas we come to consider THE HISTORICAL MONUMENTS.

The origin and development of historical composition in Iceland have been ably illustrated by another writer. It was a natural result of the circumstances of the country and its people; a taste for narrative is to this day one of the characteristics of the Northman. The uniformity of aspect which Northern nature, as compared with that of the South, presents, its long intervals of quiescence, beget the desire for a factitious variety and change; there is always something attractive in stories of movement, when the hearer is at rest; the pleasure is in its principle the same which we derive from the tales

of former times. This natural propensity to listen to narrative accompanied the first settlers to Iceland, and was nourished and developed by their successors. The former brought with them various recollections of ancient events in the North, preserved for the most part in poems which passed from mouth to mouth; their metrical form assisted the memory and was opposed to their mutilation or corruption. By degrees, however, and to a great extent, they lost this poetic form and passed into that of prose narrative, the leading passages of which were strengthened by inserted verses. From a series of continuous epic strains which recorded the principal actions of a king or a people, they assumed the shape of a series of romantic historical narratives. The occurrences in the country itself were too few to obliterate the recollection of those ancient events. The country's own history was interwoven with that of the North. With Norway Iceland was in constant connexion without being its dependent; the leading Icelanders made voyages thither, and the Icelandic coasts were visited in return by Norway traders. The arrival of a ship was an important event for every district, and the trader's relation of foreign occurrences was received with equal, if not with greater eagerness than his merchandise. From Norway also, the Iclander, in the character of warrior or skald, pursued his excursions to other countries of the North, Sweden and Denmark; thence also to the Vendic and eastern countries; in the islands of Scotland he found his own kindred; in England he was greeted in a language very similar to his own. As warrior and bard he took personal part in the events he celebrated in song. When he had acquired wealth and honor he returned to his native land and passed the rest of his days in tranquillity in his homestead. What wonder, if his children and children's children gave ear to the tales of the travelled man, and that the record of his distant adventures became an heirloom of his race and one more highly prized than the chattels he left behind. In this way were the historical materials, which had been drawn from the whole North

brought together in Iceland. The preservation of them was incidental to the character of the country and its people. They were first brought into shape in little isolated circles, in districts which mountain and stream separated almost entirely from each other; they formed the conversation of the individual family, enlivened the feast and were recounted in the bath and at every other occasion of social meeting. From being thus the property of separate distinguished families they became that of the country at large. At all the public meetings and particularly at the assembly of the Althing, the finest of the old traditions were recited, and here the most recent events that had passed on the stage of the world were reenacted by a remote people skilled in, and fondly devoted to historic lore. Every considerable chieftain had long had his Sagaman. On these occasions he came forward before the people, and the first of the land were his auditors. The song of the skald and the narrative of the Sagaman, when thus all eyes were fixed upon him, and all ears open to him, behooved not only to be artistical, lively and attractive, but true. If the recital was without life it wearied; if it varied from facts with which every auditor was familiar, if it contained falsehoods, the reciter was treated as a braggart and a liar.

The historical materials which thus by degrees accumulated themselves in the possession of the highest families of Iceland, were at last preserved for posterity. As an aid to memory the principal contents of the oldest poems were cut on wood in Runic characters; a collection of such wood tablets formed the earliest book. With Christianity the proper art of writing was introduced, and now the more bulky saga could be committed to writing and multiplied; it was written on parchment. The Runic tablets as well as the parchment books were both rare and dear. Historical knowledge itself, however, was much extended by the introduction of Christianity, which brought in its train the knowledge and literature of the South. The ecclesiastics studied and were ordained in foreign countries; the



pilgrim wandered on foot from Denmark through Europe to Rome, he sojourned on his way in monasteries and heard there of the events of the world, he visited the graves of the Saints. Intelligence from other quarters than the North thus reached Iceland. Not only the nearer and kindred lands of the Saxon and the Frank, but Italy and the Byzantine seat of empire, which had already received the Varangian into its military service, and Spain as far as Compostella, were made known; the Latin language was cultivated, schools were established in Iceland; classical writings, at least important fragments of such, were read and explained. The taste for real historical composition necessarily was created. The first writers are, as always happens, unknown; they wrote from pleasure and inward impulse, not for literary fame; the first attempts were also doubtless fragmentary. Many poems and Sagas must have been written before regular historical researches could be entered upon. These were naturally at first confined to the history of Iceland itself and afterward extended to that of other countries. The first historical inquirer with whom we are acquainted, is Are Frode; before his time, therefore, according to our hypothesis, there must not only have been many narratives in circulation in Iceland, but some of them must have been committed to writing; it was his task to put in order and arrange chronologically materials previously well known. Sæmund Frode pursued similar investigations into the history of Norway. The birth of real history was simultaneous with that of chronology. It was not till these auxiliaries were acquired — a stock of material and the critical knowledge for testing and arranging them, that history could be written. This was the bright period of Icelandic literature. The child had now become a man; had learned to concentrate its powers with thought and discrimination, to fix the wandering, to unite the unconnected. Earlier times had relied on the chance interest of the narrated events; later times passed into the opposite extreme, and the living narrative, the thoroughly historical work became transformed into dry annals.

History consists in a narrative of the events which have occurred in a country, connected, arranged, consentaneous in its parts, trustworthy and accurate, in which the spirit of the age, the actors and their transactions are exhibited in their proper order, a narrative in which not merely one or other point of time, or individual person or event is made conspicuous, but from which we are enabled to derive a clear and comprehensive view of the gradual development of a country and its inhabitants. The materials must accordingly be arranged and methodized with judgment and taste; this cannot be accomplished without producing corresponding effects upon the external form, and he only is an historian who can both embrace this harmonious arrangement in his own mind and give it utterance to others. Such a writer was Snorre Sturlason; for predecessors he had Erik Oddson, Karl Jonson, Styrmer Frode, and probably others; for a real historian does not suddenly rise up, he is the result of many antecursory and more or less unsuccessful attempts, as in like manner he draws after him a series of imitators; he himself stands alone and unapproached, because he must unite in himself many distinguished qualities, which are only occasionally exemplified in ordinary writers. His mind embraces the whole, his predecessors only succeeded in partial instances, his successors expatiate and corrupt the truth with false additions; the former strive and enquire without attaining their purpose, the latter babble without carrying conviction; he creates.

The most remarkable work of history in Icelandic literature is: SNORRE STURLASON'S SAGAS OF THE NORWEGIAN KINGS, or as it is called after the initial word of the first page, *Heimskringla* (circle of the world). No one reads this but finds himself attracted, without perhaps being able to account for his affection, and carried back unconsciously to the times and habits of which it treats. The narrative is simple, entirely free from glitter, and the style elevated; conciseness gives it strength, the descriptions are appropriate and expressive; in short the form is throughout adapted to the matter, and both together

coalesce into perfect unity. The author is sparing of reflections and only applies them where he wishes to place the subject before his reader in the particular point of view which he has selected; he does nothing but relate, but he shews that this relation is founded on previous reflection.

As to the manner in which this work, destined for lasting popularity, was produced, modern opinions differ. Many Sagas existed before the time of Snorre and were used by him. The historian rescues his materials from the chaos, but does not create them. It is said that he took up these older Sagas, struck out what displeased him, condensed what was scattered, added passages of his own, and interwove here and there stanzas from the ancient Skaldic songs, and then made over his manuscript to his copyists. And there are people who can believe that in this mechanical manner a work so well distributed and so well connected in all its parts, so perfect as a whole, could be produced! Was it not rather the work of his own knowledge and thought? All the older Sagas were doubtless familiar to him, he knew them by heart, at least their principal passages; the country of which he wrote and its people were well known to him; he had reflected for years on his materials, had fashioned them in his mind, and then gave them the form he had thus conceived. Snorre's merit then, was not that of collection, this had already been accomplished, it was that of appropriation; neither was he the first chronologer; Are Frode had preceded him as such, and he uses Are Frode's dates; but he built upon these foundations. His merit lay in connexion and development, in novelty of views, in beauty and fitness of expression (in which qualities one rival work alone, *Njal's Saga* approaches him), in the judicious, critical and unprejudiced use of his sources, in his careful distinction between the certain and the doubtful, in his rejection of incidents unworthy of history, coupled with unfailing detection of the characteristic, and in the faculty of giving spirit and life to all that came under his pen. Are these not the very qualities which make the historical

masterpieces of the classics so attractive to us? Were not these masterpieces produced by the same process as that of Snorre? Had not their authors also old materials, song and tradition and chronicle before them? Did they not, like Snorre, bring into an harmonious whole heterogeneous and disconnected elements? What great work of the human mind, historical or poetical, was ever otherwise produced? We are, at least, at a loss to imagine how a work of the spirit can be produced by a spiritless and mechanical process. The perusal of Snorre's work must satisfy us a priori, that its excellence is the fruit of intellectual activity; to prove this assertion by detail of particular passages would exceed our limits. To judge, however, justly, and feel the beauties of this author, we require a better edition than we possess. Many therefore will rejoice to hear that such an edition, with a translation to correspond, is intended to be published by the Society of Northern Antiquaries.

The most important of the series of Sagas already published by the Society under the title of *FORNMÄNNA SÖGUR*, concerns specially the history of Norway. *Sverrer's Saga* and *Hakon Hakonson's Saga* may be considered as continuations of Snorre; they do not indeed equal him in freshness and liveliness, but they are worthy associates. The remaining Norwegian Sagas have most interest when considered with reference to Snorre; his superiority becomes then most conspicuous; they bear nearly the same relation to him as the diffuse narratives of the prose Edda bear to the enigmatical but impressive strains of the poetic. Of *Olaf Tryggvason's Saga* we have two versions, the one by the monk *Gunnlaug*, the other by the monk *Odd*; both wrote their historical works in Latin, and what is now extant of them are later Icelandic translations, the first with various additions, the latter more faithful. The style of neither has been improved by the circumstance of their being translations; in that of *Odd* especially it is evident how much trouble the translator gave himself, and how much he was seduced to render the Latin turn of expression. It seems probable that

these compositions in their original form were among the sources of Snorre's work, and a comparison will give a conception of his vast superiority. The noble and the spirited appear to the best advantage in juxtaposition with the vapid and the flat. While reading Snorre we are hardly aware of the person of the author, we know not whether he be heathen or christian, friend or foe; in both the other works the monk appears throughout, intent on exciting admiration for the promoters of Christianity, and forgetful that his hero is to be exalted not by length of sentences and accumulation of words, but by an expressive relation of his actions. The Saga of Olaf the Saint and those which follow are of later date, and we see in them how little Snorre's successors were able to attain the purity of his historical compositions. These works have therefore no value as models, but only as sources, and in this latter respect will long remain subjects for the enquiries of future writers of history; occasionally indeed they exhibit passages which rise to a purer and higher level; and they scarcely contain any narrative which will not reward him who sifts it with some grains of gold.

The series of Sagas above specified specially illustrate the history of Norway. The ancient condition of that country derives much illustration from the collection published by Charles C. Rafn under the title of *FORNALDAR SÖGUR NORDRLANDA*, and most of the recent historians of Norway have consulted both these sources. Both these collections are however of value for the history also of Denmark; in conjunction with Saxo they present the foundation of our knowledge of this country in its earlier times. It is sufficiently known that without the Icelandic remains we should possess but very confused accounts of the succession of the Danish kings, and their actions in remote times. If we were without the Sagas of Rolf Krake, Ragnar Lodbrok, the narratives of Starkad, and several similar fragments, we should not be in condition to understand the histories and the songs which Saxo has preserved for us; without the *Jomsvikinga Saga* Palnatoke would be a mere unsubstantial

form for us, and the relations between Christianity and heathenism at the period of the introduction of the former, would have remained involved in obscurity. There is finally one entire Saga, the *Knytlinga*, which treats of Denmark alone, and embraces exactly the period from Harald Bluetooth to Canute the Sixth, the period which Saxo has treated. The author of this Saga is considered to have been the nephew of Snorre Sturlason, Olaf Thordson Hvitaskald, who was attached to the court of Valdemar the second, and had a high reputation not only as a poet but as a man of learning. He had passed a portion of his youth with Snorre, and could not fail to wish to tread in his footsteps. His work may in fact be considered as a shorter *Heimskringla* for Denmark, and where the author's materials gave him scope for adornment he knew how to use it; read for example the story of Canute the saint in the *Knytlinga* Saga and Saxo. For illustration of the history of Denmark may be consulted a number of minor narratives, more or less trustworthy, which are to be found scattered through the Icelandic Sagas; they throw light on the interesting subject of the relations which subsisted between Iceland and Denmark and the Danish sovereigns, and on many characteristic features of manners and usages, and nearly all are remarkable for naiveté and delineation of character.

Another series of Sagas, the publication of which has been commenced, are those which treat of Iceland itself, *ÍSLENDÍNGA SÖGUR*. The interest and importance of these arise partly from the claim that country has on attention, partly from the merit of their contents in respect both of form and matter. In both these separate points of view they are unquestionably among the most remarkable productions of Icelandic literature. As the nursing mother of the ancient history of the North, Iceland has claims on our respect, but also on account of her peculiar, first patriarchal, and next aristocratic constitution; while the entire North was obedient to kings, upon a remote island arose a republic, which without the influence of a numerous

population, or any command of physical power, could contrive to make itself respected by the mightiest kings. If we seek with so much avidity as we do to learn what these Icelanders have said of our forefathers, of their kings and their institutions, we must also find peculiar interest in learning what this lively, indefatigable and intelligent people has said of itself, of its own origin and progress, of the birth and growth of the Icelandic passion for narrative. These questions find their answer in a number of sagas, which give accounts of the discovery and occupation of the country, of the process by which the republic was formed and maintained its independence, of the rise and development of the community at large, of the education of the skalds, of the labour of the historian, and finally of the cessation of this whole life of activity and the union of the country with Norway. The history, however, of this country has at the same time this peculiarity, that it is not written in any continuous narrative, but in several, which encroach on and illustrate each other; that in these sagas the predominant idea is not that of describing the transactions of an entire race or country, but only of depicting the most remarkable men of this or that race; they are therefore neither dry annals, nor regular history; and out of this peculiar constitution arise excellencies and defects, which distinguish them as unique in their kind from the history of every other people. They are, namely, representations of real occurrences, and yet have the appearance of romance; they preserve for the most part an accurate chronology, but neither was this one of the objects of their composition, nor the arrangement of events in such an order as might enable us to compare them with those of other countries; their object was to paint the hero of the tale; is he a viking, the page is thronged with naval expeditions; is he a skald, the saga is filled with his verses; is he a man of law, we have lawsuit on lawsuit in which he interferes; the slayer of men commits slaughter upon slaughter without atonement; he is found guilty and condemned at the judicial assembly, and

then the narrative of his life expands into a description of the arts by which he outwits and escapes his pursuers. Here however, as in real life, it is not the man only who determines and acts; woman has her share in the drama, and at the side of the chief we continually find his wife sometimes soothing, sometimes exciting; there is even hardly a type of the female character which is not to be found in the pages of these sagas, from the damsel cherishing a first love in her faithful bosom, and who with eyes fixed on her lover's mantle, the only token of the absent she possesses, thinks of him as she breathes her last sigh, to the passionate, jealous female whose first youthful love has been exchanged for hate, only to be quenched in the blood of her lover; from the devoted wife who clings to her husband to perish with him in the flames with which his enemies have surrounded him, to the haughty spirit who neither forgets nor forgives, who, without complaint or sign of anger, cherishes the remembrance of a deserved chastisement, till her husband, surrounded by foes, appeals to her for aid on which his life depends, and then her hate blazes up in her stern refusal. It was a direct consequence of the republican institutions of Iceland that political relations extended their influence into the social and private life of its people; the man and his motives of action could not be displayed without shewing him in his domestic relations. Near him we see his slave, his dog, as in the pages of those romances which attract us by their fidelity to actual life. The best of these sagas not only contribute much to our knowledge of the manners of the North, but in respect of excellent delineation of character, and artistical treatment of their materials, such as are to be found in Nial's Saga, will bear comparison with distinguished specimens of the literature of other countries.

It is not, meanwhile, the history of the North alone which derives its nourishment from these sources. The other three points of the European compass are indebted to the sagas for contributions to their history, their geography and their



antiquities. The Icelander traversed Europe on his way to Rome; the geography of Germany and Italy necessarily engaged his attention, in proof of which we may observe that the seat of learning at Erfurth is first mentioned in the writings of the Icelanders. The close connexion which existed between the North and Russia, the Slavonic countries, England, Scotland and Ireland has produced this consequence, that the historian of any of these countries will find it a duty to explore the sources of the North for many topographical and chronological illustrations, and also for traces of many historical events which such investigation and comparison will enable him to confirm or to reject. A period of Russian history, to cite instances, is illustrated by Eymund's Saga; the history of the Slavonic countries by all the sagas which treat of Norway and Denmark; that of the British isles likewise by those which concern Iceland; that of Spain by Hakon Hakonson's Saga etc. By travels to Miklegard (Constantinople) and Palestine, the Greek empire and Asia minor are drawn within the circle; and for the history of discovery it will always be a memorable circumstance that beyond question the oldest accounts of America of a date long previous to its more recent discovery by Columbus, are preserved by the Icelanders. In this manner, and through the not improbable conjecture that Columbus either in England, or in Iceland itself, strengthened his own convictions by what he collected of the recollections preserved of the Northern navigators, the old Northern history holds out the hand of friendship to the modern.

With the historical writings upon Iceland are nearly connected THE ICELANDIC LAWS. With regard to these our jurists have already made it clear and demonstrated in particular cases, that it is the laws which sustain the credibility of the sagas, and that it is only by the joint study of both that we can attain a complete insight into the life and manners of the North. The laws shew especially that among its people in times preceding and reaching down to the middle ages, no such utter

barbarism reigned as has been too often imputed to those periods; in pursuing the laws into their details we shall find, on the contrary, occasion to admire the accuracy and the subtlety with which analogous subjects are distinguished from each other, and almost every possible case is foreseen; and further the precision with which the due enforcement of the law as well as the mere enactment is provided for, a particular in which these times far surpass our own; finally the care taken for their full promulgation, which brought them to the knowledge of every member of the state, and made them the intellectual property of the community at large. A consequence was that no serious infraction of the law could occur without a prosecution, for to institute such was not the duty merely of the individual injured, but of the people at large, and to leave a criminal unprosecuted was a disgrace. In many particular clauses upon marriage and domestic institutions, upon the poor, upon the duties of the householder towards menials and slaves, even towards beasts, an article, the omission of which in modern times may well surprise us, we find evidence of a spirit of humanity which argues neither barbarism nor indifference to the welfare of fellow created beings. For the study of jurisprudence itself the laws of Iceland will unquestionably prove of importance, whether considered by themselves, or with reference to those of other countries. Considered in the first point of view they will serve to shew him who investigates them how a people, separated from the rest of the North and left to itself, contrived to work out its constitution; compared with the codes of other northern districts, especially with that of Norway, the benefit of illustration will be mutual. For the history of the progress of society in general important results may fairly be expected from a comparison of Icelandic with Roman law for example, thereby tracing the progress of development in the South and in the extreme North, and marking the peculiarities of each.

In discussing the value of a literature, the LANGUAGE in which it is embodied must engage consideration. Language is the instrument by which the race of man develops its intellect; for a people it is the organ of all its communications, the voice of the past to the future, and of the present to the present; in science it is the blood which pervades and nourishes the system. For the philologist it is an interesting task to investigate a language, which by its robust vigour and its artistical structure, declares itself the product of a sturdy though vanished age, just as it is interesting to after generations to listen to the narrative of the deeds of their remote progenitors, even though they may have exercised no influence on public life. This interest encreases when the language in question exhibits not merely strength, but self-dependence, unusual flexibility and richness; when in such respects it is equalled by few and surpassed by none. It is pretty generally agreed that this is to be predicated of two European languages, the Greek and the Old-Northern. Both are self-sufficient, require neither foreign words nor foreign forms, have developed themselves out of themselves, and by their inherent power; both possess an artistical, somewhat complex and yet beautiful and regular structure; both, finally, though long extinct, enjoy second life in daughter languages, which strikingly resemble their respective mothers, so that the natural graces and movements of the latter are easily recognized beneath the folds of the modern garment. The fact that two such languages with which almost all others in Europe are connected by descent or near affinity, have been preserved so true and uncorrupted in the South and North respectively, is among the most remarkable phenomena in the history of language. Our wonder however is greater, when we institute a comparison and find that however wide the local separation of the two, they yet by the most striking similitude in structure and development, betray the closeness of their sisterly affinity. With respect to philology in general, the study of the Old-Northern language is of great importance; this needs no proof,

being universally admitted. As the Gothic race spread itself from the shores of the Black Sea to the snow-clad mountains of Iceland, in the same manner one and the same race of language extended itself over all the intervening regions. The continuity of this chain of speech may be pursued from the Mæsothian, through the Slavonic to the Allemannic, Frankish, and the various high and low German dialects; from these, through the Anglo-Saxon and its offshoots, to the language which was once spoken over the whole North, and which we mean to designate, when we speak of the Old-Northern, or old Icelandic. This language the Icelanders themselves often, perhaps most usually, called by the name Danish tongue (*dönsk tunga*) as also frequently, Norse language (*norrena*, *norrent mál*) and finally Icelandic (*vort mál*), and they thus recognized no essential difference between the language spoken in Iceland, on the mountains of Norway and the plains of Denmark. We have only to inspect the modern Swedish, to satisfy ourselves that this also in its earlier age claimed to be a member of the same family. It becomes necessary then to know the primæval language and this not superficially, as well for the purpose of comprehending the mutual dependency of the other ancient Gothic tongues as for attaining any thing like a fundamental knowledge of the modern.

This however will only be acknowledged by those, who do not pause at the superficialities, but seek to reach the deeper foundation of all science. There are two processes by which languages may be studied, the one mechanical, which seeks merely to attain an acquaintance with the forms of the language and to apply them in tolerable accordance with the prevailing usage; the other scientific, by which we seek to know the language not merely as it now exists, but to its foundation, not merely its present forms, but its rise, the changes which time has introduced, and the manner in which it has arrived at its present state. In other words the object here is not merely an acquaintance with the customary usages of a language,

but also of their causes and of the conditions under which they exist; not merely a practical dexterity in the application of them, but a critical knowledge which can shew and explain the correctness of such an application. By the first process we learn the language as the child learns it, we learn it by imitation. By the second we think for ourselves, and this we cannot do without preparatory knowledge and persevering research. These two differ as scientific pursuit differs from the mere repetition of what others know, as the profound jurist differs from the routine practitioner, who looks not beyond the letter of the statute, in which the case he argues is concerned. Language, as a natural object, may so far come under the domain of natural history that we may compare it with botany. Frequent observation and memory will enable us to give plants their names and class them according to systems already invented; the intellectual process by which the system itself was invented, or improved, is of a different and higher order.

Our inference from these remarks and illustrations, is this, that to judge thoroughly of effects we must explore their causes, that in this view the present depends upon the past, and that we can only know a language by the study of its parents and its kindred. It is well enough known that the knowledge of Latin is of incalculable assistance towards that of Italian and French, from the continual analogies which present themselves, and this assistance would be more effective, if greater pains were taken in instruction to enable the scholar to take a systematic view of these analogies. Many perhaps will consider it an exaggeration to affirm that the philologist who would thoroughly master the Greek language, must call in to his aid the Old-Northern; the assertion however would not be far from the truth; he will at least by such aid be able to throw light on many obscurities; the converse of the proposition is obviously no less maintainable. As to the Gothic race of language, we have seen all its investigators betake themselves to the Old-Northern, as well because its literature is richer than, for example,

that of most of the old German dialects, as also because its development has been so complete that it cannot fail to illustrate those dialects which are less perfect. It would then be a signal blunder to pursue this remarkable race step by step through Europe, and to stop short of the termination; the chain of language from Thrace to the Baltic is but a fragment if we leave it separated from its extreme link, the massy ring of the North. Even as this chain winds along through its various intervening portions from the Black Sea to the base of Hecla, so thence it winds back, eastward, southward and westward through the countries which the old Northmen in remote antiquity, and in the middle ages, visited and wasted and conquered and colonized, and where they have left their traces in the features, the hair, the appearance and the language of the existing inhabitants. Hence not only Germany and Russia, but England also, particularly Northumberland and Scotland, especially her islands, with some districts of western France, recognize idioms of their languages in the Icelandic, and much which would otherwise be obscure is explained. Without this indispensable aid, the science of European language is unattainable as a whole; without it those gaps must remain open which so often occur in the languages of the middle ages to confound and thwart the search after unity; without it we can obtain no clear view of the basis on which the principal modern languages, especially the German and English, and in part also the French, repose. For a knowledge of the living languages of the North, this insight into the old mother tongue is beyond question essential; but for the illustration of those of the South it is not less useful and important.

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## CURSORY VIEW OF THE MONUMENTS AND ANTIQUITIES OF THE NORTH.

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How undeniable soever the proposition that no history of a country, that is, a narrative of events and actions connected and chronologically arranged, can be conceived which shall be independent of written materials, or, as they are called, immediate sources, it is not less certain that monuments and remains of antiquity, other than literary, have a just claim to be considered as indirect sources for the same historical result. Even if such may not avail to make us acquainted with new positive facts, if they fail to certify a list of sovereigns, or to fix a series of dates, they may yet serve, collectively considered, to give us a clearer perception of the religion, the culture, the external life, and other particulars of our forefathers than can be supplied even by the written sources, to which latter no such high antiquity can be ascribed, in which old traditions are mixed up with newer, and which, as they have been committed to writing in later times, must have been liable to many corruptions of their text. The other remains of which we speak, form, some of them, a complement to the literary, extending our knowledge beyond the periods when the latter begin to deserve belief, and sometimes awakening and fortifying conjectures as to emigrations and connexions of nations respecting which history is silent. But even the mute memorials have a still higher significance for us. They lead us back to the original population of our northern country, they make us live again our fathers' life. A grave mound, a lonely circle of stones, a stone implement, a metal ornament excavated from the covered chamber of death, afford a livelier image of antiquity than Saxo or Snorre, the Eddas, or the Germany of Tacitus. And will not the explorer of the past contemplate a work of the arts of the middle ages, with an interest which no record can excite.

Accordingly there never has been a period since our history began to be cultivated and studied but these monuments

have formed an object of attention and investigation, although often viewed in a false light and though the subject has been treated in a tasteless and unscientific manner. Who can reflect without regret on the number of objects of this nature which in the course of the last two centuries have become irretrievably lost to us in despite of the exertions of our antiquaries Ole Worm, Bure, Resen and Rudbeck to transmit an account of them for the use of posterity, exertions not the less praiseworthy although now felt to be inadequate to their object. It must be so much the more gratifying to every one who takes an interest in the olden time to know that at no period were its monuments less exposed to the risk of being undervalued and destroyed than they are now. The interest in the study of Northern antiquity, and consequently in that of its monumental remains, has hardly been at any period more diffused or more active than at present. Discoveries relating to it are ever sure of being received with sympathy by the public. As in other educated countries, collections have been established here for the preservation of the remains of former ages. The parties connected with these hold profitable communication with each other. Scientific travellers in remote regions keep a watchful eye on the remains scattered over them.

But again the remains of the past requite the attention bestowed on them by assisting other scientific pursuits than the strictly historical. They assist to answer questions as to the natural history of our northern countries, their people, changes of climate and the like. To instance one subject, the interest of which has been lately revived, the solution of the problem of the ancient colonization of Greenland, and the position of the Icelandic settlements in that quarter, would appear to depend quite as much on the objects of antiquity lately discovered, particularly on Runic inscriptions, as on written documents and nautical evidence.

We may in pursuance hope that the following summary which has for its object to set forth what has been regarded as



the best authenticated and most worth knowing on the subject of the memorials of northern antiquity, may be found not unworthy the notice of the educated public.

### GRAVE MOUNDS AND PLACES OF BURIAL.

In the North, as in almost all other countries, the tomb is the oldest memorial of the past. The desire to preserve the loved and lost, in remembrance at least, is so deeply implanted in human nature, that we find evidence of it even among the most savage tribes. In the North the fashion of the grave has greatly varied with different periods. One of the reasons for this is the difference which has from time to time occurred in the mode of dealing with the corpse. At some periods the body was deposited in sand in a chamber or a large stone chest; at others it was burnt, and nothing but the ashes or burnt bones were preserved in urns or smaller stone coffins; sometimes it was interred in a sitting posture. Sometimes the same receptacle contained not a single corpse, but whole families, or many warriors fallen in a battle; sometimes not only the human dead, but his caparisoned horse, his dog and other animals which it was wished should accompany him to another world. It is obvious that customs so varied required arrangements equally diversified. In almost all the districts of the North we meet with a number of mounds greater or smaller, the work of human hands. Experiment proves that most of them have served for burial, and that they are not inaccurately termed grave mounds. As a general remark we may observe that the greater number of them is met with on the coast, and in positions which command a view of the ocean, or at least of an arm of the sea, but that they are very seldom found in what is now morass or meadow land. On the other hand they are found in considerable number on the sandy heaths of our country. Some of these mounds, we must here remark, may have had another purpose; they may have served for signal stations, or what were formerly called *Baunehöie*, spots for

the kindling of fire beacons to warn against invasion. Others may have served for sacrificial and religious purposes. A third kind of far more recent date, and which have usually retained the name of gallows-hills, were intended for places of execution, though we must observe that to save trouble, burial mounds of a preceding period were not unfrequently selected for this purpose. Generally speaking we may safely assert that these three latter varieties are exceptional, and that the great majority of the mounds which bear evidence of human construction are sepulchral. They have been called by many appellations, as *Ættehöie*, mound of a family or race, *Jættestuer*, giant's chamber, *Troldestuer*, goblin's chamber, *Jynovne*, *Steenkister*, *Dysser*, *Kuml*, and other names implying stone heap, or chamber, sometimes with an addition implying either a memorial of the name of the occupant, as *Rolf's mound*, *Hother's mound*, or the purpose of the construction, as *Blothöi*, hill of sacrifice, or its quality, as *Maglehöi*, great hill, *Sortehöi*, black hill, or situation, as the hillocks of the black brook, the hills of the cloister etc. Many lying near together have often one name, as the *Troldrække*, the Goblin's Group, the Brothers, the Six Hills. It is obvious that when the name identifies the dead, or the purpose of the mound, it becomes of importance, and equally so that the appellation more recently applied and founded on the accidents of fashion or position, is of no further use than so far as it serves to distinguish from others the particular mound in question.

These elevations may be classed as the round, the oblong, stony, and low grave mounds.

1. THE ROUND GRAVE MOUNDS are the most common. We meet with them every where in Scandinavia. Some of the most considerable are surrounded at their bases with one or more circles of large stones. Higher up on their sides they are sometimes ornamented with similar circles. These circles are not in every instance to be recognized, some of the stones being occasionally covered with earth, and others having often been removed. It would appear however that the

greater number of these mounds were not furnished with these outer circles at least not with the upper ones. The size of the mounds is very various, but in general they observe the same proportions between the height and the circumference. In many places we find several near together and as if in connexion with each other, though not of the same size.

2. THE OBLONG MOUNDS are usually lower than the above mentioned. They are most usually surrounded by a range of stones, and serve to cover two or three stone chests of which one is set near either end. Of several it has been observed that the stone ranges have at their extremities large stones, and form sometimes an oblong rectangular figure. In the long stone ranges we often find stone chests composed of cleff stones, one chest in the middle and one at each extremity; in these have been found fragments of earthen urns and burnt bones, a proof that many at least of these stone ranges were places of burial.

3. STONE MOUNDS (*Dysser*, cairns). By this term we designate the burial places formed of a heap of stones thrown together, and not now or formerly covered with earth. In very many of the before mentioned round hillocks, similar heaps have been found composed of stones not bigger than a man could lift. We see from these that this mode of sepulture was not uncommon; but those of which we are now speaking are distinguished by the absence of all traces of having ever been covered with earth, and by a very regular exterior construction. In Denmark they are rare, but are of more frequent occurrence in Sweden and Norway. The name *Dysser* (stone mounds or hillocks) has been by the common people given to broken up, and partly destroyed sepulchral chambers or other stone ranges, and the term has been borrowed from popular use by others. We are of opinion it ought to be confined to the particular kind in question, and that the others should be designated by the name they would have obtained if seen in their primitive and perfect condition.

4. **THE LOW GRAVE MOUNDS.** We designate by this term small elevations of earth, often but an ell in height above the adjacent surface, which contain sepulchral urns and small objects of the heathen age. They are usually found many together, forming as it were a kind of cemetery. That large natural sand hills were used in the latest part of the heathen period for the reception of many graves, and may occasionally be viewed as cemeteries, is a conjecture which daily gains corroboration.

It is difficult to assert any thing decided of the internal arrangement of the grave mound, as differences of period and destination, which are not always to be detected from without, have produced considerable varieties in their construction. We may, however, observe that the greater number of stone chambers have been found in the circular mounds; that the passage or stone tunnel, which leads to the interior, usually on a level with the surrounding land, is found usually towards the East, sometimes to the South, and that this passage has sometimes been used for sepulture; and that often several chambers have been found in the same mound. Experience shews that in the stone chambers, the bodies, often unburnt, are either deposited in sand, or placed on stones, and that in this kind of chamber, which belongs to remoter periods, the objects found are generally of stone, rarely of bronze or gold, and more rarely still, or rather never, of iron or silver. In another kind of mound, in which there is a large heap of stones thrown together, we less frequently meet with stone chambers, but more usually with stone chests, formed of slabs, and not larger than is necessary to contain a few urns, or burned bones, or the sword of the deceased. A third internal arrangement was the introduction of a wooden structure. Wherever this occurs we may assume with tolerable certainty that the mound belongs to the latter period of heathenism, and may reasonably expect to find a harvest of rare objects. Sometimes the bodies were buried in ships or boats, which were dragged ashore and placed in the mound, as is confirmed by several accounts. Such ship mounds have also been found in

Sweden and Norway, or a least such fragments of wood as it is supposed belonged to ships or boats.

### STONE GROUPINGS.

Sites marked out, or bounded by large stones in regular arrangement, are frequent in the Scandinavian countries, and various purposes have been attributed to them. They have been supposed to have served as sites for sepulture, for the administration of public justice, for single combat, and for sacrificial ceremonies. To discriminate between these probable objects is now a matter of difficulty, and there are not a few of them which seem scarcely fitted for any of these destinations. Several are now incapable of satisfactory elucidation, because only a portion of the original arrangement is extant; the stones only, for example, which were contained in, or encircled a sepulchral mound, from which the earth has been removed, or the stone foundation on which a wooden structure was once erected.

1. PLACES FOR SEPULTURE. It has been already mentioned that in many are found stone chests with urns and burnt bones.

2. PLACES OF JUSTICE (*Tingsteder*). It is known that courts of justice in old times were held in the open air and that the people flocked to such sometimes in great numbers, not merely for the decision of suits, but for purposes of general polity and government. Some traditions, probably not very ancient, aver that the judges sat upon, or rather within a circle of large stones, the *Domring* (judgment circle) as it was called. Most of the stone ranges which have been referred to this class, are oval. The great stones which form the ring appear usually ill adapted for seats, but, if it be supposed that these stone groupings were places of justice, it is probable that they formed merely an inner boundary fence against the crowd, as we know that an outer one was used of stakes and ropes. We find, though very rarely, several of these enclosures contiguous to each other in compartments, which would seem to indicate some arrangement into districts of the parties who attended.

3. PLACES OF COMBAT. We have innumerable accounts of single combats which the heroes of the North often waged in the presence of their entire armies. Sometimes these took place on small islands (*Holme*), and were thence called *Holmgange*; but when fought on the main land, it appears to have been thought necessary to fence in the place of combat. This may have been the destination of certain spacious quadrangular enclosures of stones, of which several are extant. The stones at the four angles are sometimes larger than the others, and not unfrequently a very large stone is placed in the middle of one of the shorter sides of the parallelogram. It is a natural inference from our supposition as to their purpose, that the space enclosed must have been cleared of stones and inequalities of surface, and this is found to be the case in the instances referred to this class. In some of them, however, it is probable that the party who fell was afterwards buried.

4. PLACES OF SACRIFICE. This class is still more difficult to discriminate with certainty. It has been a custom to assume of every stone grouping where one great stone was found placed upon others, that it was an altar, and the site a place of sacrifice. This theory however can only be admitted with modifications. To those who introduced Christianity into the North, the extirpation of heathenism was an object too important to allow us to suppose that they would have left standing so large a number of altars dedicated to the very worship which they were bent upon abolishing by every means in their power. Those who cut down sacred groves, broke idols and burnt temples, would certainly also have destroyed the objects in question. It may, however, be possible that some stone altars should have remained to our times. If they had been deserted as belonging to a still earlier form of worship, and no longer venerated when Christianity was first introduced, there was perhaps no sufficient motive to a task, which, before gunpowder was invented, was from the size of the stones often one of great labour. If we suppose that the earth might be removed

from some of the mounds, from those, for instance, which were broken up and ransacked, still it was difficult to remove the large stones from their place, and they were besides of less value and applicability than now for the purposes of agriculture, boundary, or road making. It seems therefore likely enough that they were left undisturbed, while the earth was perhaps removed to fill up hollows in roads and other such purposes. If we observe these stone assemblages closely, we shall see that the upper or superimposed stone on which it is presumed that the sacrifice took place, has not the flat surface suited to such a purpose, and that on the other hand, the under stones which support the other, have almost always been arranged so as to form a small quadrangular space with an aperture in one side something like a small chamber, which would appear somewhat superfluous if the structure had no other purpose but that of an altar. Various attempts have been made to explain this construction. If the earth was carried away from a tumulus and nothing left but the sepulchral chamber, the latter must have presented exactly the appearance of those stone groupings, which have been called altars in some places and *Jynovne* in others. This is one solution. Others have remarked that in the East Indies a sort of stone receptacle is found, bearing a resemblance to those in question, and which is adapted to hold a domestic idol in the niche, and sometimes the ashes of some deceased member of the family, after cremation, are placed in it. This is another. It happens not unfrequently that at the side of some of the mounds, especially the smaller, we find oblong quadrangular stone assemblages which appear to join and be in immediate connexion with the sepulchre. It has been conjectured that they were places of sacrifice and that the funeral was accompanied by sacrificial rites. Others have supposed them to be places of single combat, and the neighbouring sepulchre as destined for the vanquished. None of these solutions is free from doubt. The discovery of similar monuments in solitary situations, where they may have been safer from

injury, and diligent comparison, may perhaps in time lead us to more certain conclusions.

5. **SHIP FORMED ENCLOSURES.** We apply this term to the instances in which the stones are arranged in the form of a ship as here delineated:



Several kinds of these have been met with, some of them so distinct in form as to leave no doubt of the intention of their authors. In Denmark they are rare, less so in Sweden; some have even the rowers' benches and the mast indicated by stones. They well deserve closer investigation, and more correct delineations than we as yet possess.

6. **TRIANGULAR AND CIRCULAR ENCLOSURES** are a peculiar kind. Of the first there are some with straight sides, and others have them slightly curved inward. Some have larger stones at the angles and the centres of the sides. Some are paved within the inclosure, others have a clay floor, others nothing but the bare earth. Sometimes they are found in connexion with enclosures of the circular form, but in other respects similar. Opinion has been in favour of their being places of sacrifice, and some have considered them as belonging to a form of worship anterior to that of Odin. In Germany similar remains are met with.

7. **BAUTASTONES** or monumental stones. This name has been applied to tall, slender stones placed in an upright position, either single, or many in connexion, which stand about three ells or more in height and are easily distinguished from the stones which belong to other classes of monuments. In Denmark they are very rare, and are only known to exist within her territory at Bornholm and in the island of Fuur in the firth called Limfiord; they are found in all parts of Norway and Sweden. It is known that our ancestors erected such



stones in honour of fallen heroes. Where many are found together it has been conjectured that they were erected to many warriors who fell in the same battle. They are nearly all without inscriptions; but if we may judge from their shape, it would seem that some stones subsequently inscribed with Runic characters, had originally been Bautastones.

8. **ROCKING STONES.** This name is given to certain large stones which are found placed on the point of a rock, or on some artificially pointed stone in such a manner that even although of very considerable height they may, by means of a very slight force, nay in some cases, by a mere touch of the hand be made to rock or oscillate from one side to the other. It is obvious that a stone, to admit of such oscillation must be poised on a point at, or very near its centre. When thus set in motion an obtuse sound may sometimes be heard. In many countries such stones have been found and there are various legends concerning them. One opinion is that they served for oracular purposes. Caution is necessary to avoid confounding them with accidents of nature which have sometimes produced similar results.

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## OBJECTS OF THE HEATHEN PERIOD.

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### A. OBJECTS OF STONE.

In a collection of Northern Antiquities stone objects must have the first place, as belonging to the earliest ages. They may be classified as follows:

1. **WHETSTONES**, used for fashioning other stones; they are either flat or club-shaped, more rarely of oval or other forms.

2. **WEDGES** or **quoins**, which, almost without exception, have been intended to be set in wood. They are sometimes without any back, being thinned off at either end; sometimes

with a back, and sometimes flat and thin. These three varieties are sometimes rough-hewn, in other cases polished on the broad sides, or on their whole surface. They are usually of flint. There are some other varieties, which are scarcely ever of flint, as round and thick, and round and sharpheaded, some of them with a small round hole perforated in the end opposite the edge; and others having a shoulder in the middle to prevent the wedge from entering too far into the wooden handle or socket.

3. CHISELS and GOUGES, of which there are several varieties, the narrow gouge, the flat gouge, the round gouge, and finally with a hilt or handle, which latter is not of flint.

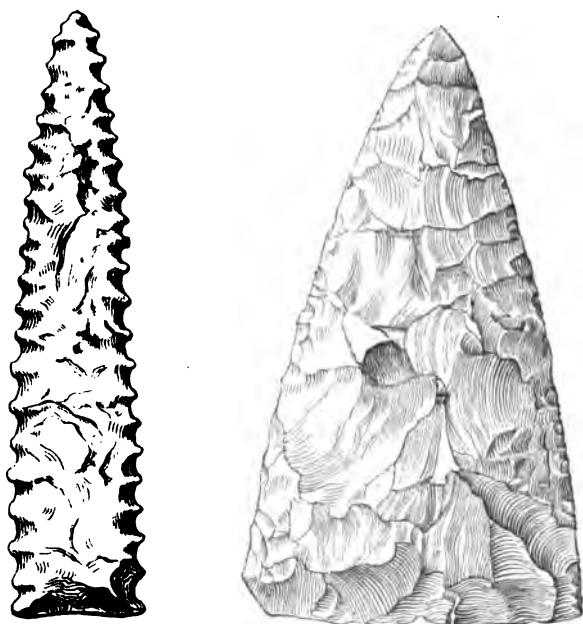
4. KNIVES AND LANCE HEADS. As it is generally speaking impossible to distinguish these two sorts from each other, we deem it most expedient to notice them under one head, merely observing that the very long pieces of flint when used as lance heads would be very apt to snap across; whereas if they were inserted into handles of a shorter length, they would be less liable to the risk of breaking. But we may observe that if once the point of the lance had penetrated, the destructive effect would be produced with equal certainty, even if the point broke off in the wound. Stone articles of this description have been classified according to the tang, or that part designed for insertion into the wood; in some this part is hardly discernible, in others it is of a flat or square shape, the latter with the edges notched for the purpose of retaining the cord or ligature which was wound about it; in others again it is of an accurately defined shape adorned with ornaments cut in the flint, and forming thus a complete handle which was evidently not intended to be inserted in a haft. It is worthy of notice that these articles of flint are scarcely ever ground smooth, but merely rough hewn, which is the more remarkable from their being frequently found along with wedges of ground flint, a circumstance which clearly shows that the art of grinding implements of that material was not unknown at that period. If we assume that the knives were at a somewhat later period chiefly

used at sacrifices and funeral ceremonies, we might perhaps suppose that they had retained a form, and were wrought after a fashion that was commemorative of a very remote age, in which the more artistical process of grinding was less generally known, since experience shows that the forms which continue unvaried for the greatest length of time, are precisely those which are used in religious rites, there being something venerable in the very notion of antiquity. Thus it is worthy of remark that, like the Egyptians of yore, the Jews themselves in certain countries do still, in imitation of Abraham, continue to employ a stone knife in the operation of circumcision.



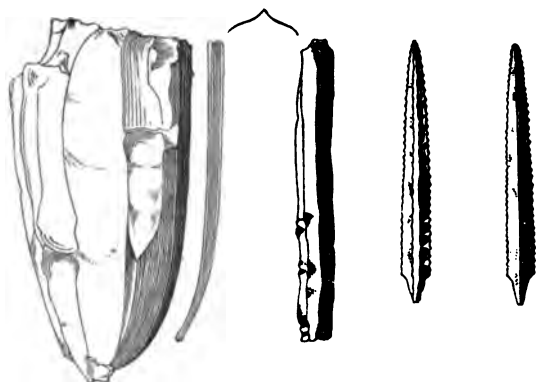
As a specimen of one of the most remarkable implements of flint, unique of its kind, we may here notice and present our readers with a delineation of a knife in the form of a sickle, with a projecting point for the handle, which is narrower and more slender than the blade, but hewn from the same piece of stone. The knife and handle together are 14 inches in length. With respect to the purpose for which this knife was intended, we cannot venture to offer any conjecture; it would seem however to have been employed rather as an attribute, or as a baton of command, than designed for actual use, seeing that it was very liable to be snapped across.

We may here farther make mention of a notched or dentated implement resembling a pointed saw or rasp, whereof only a few have been found, and of a similar but still rarer variety without notches or teeth, of which delineations on a reduced scale are here given:



5. SEMILUNAR IMPLEMENTS of flint, found like the knives, only hewn, but never ground; some of them are curved on the outer edge only, and either without teeth, or with teeth on the inner edge only, or with teeth on both edges; these are supposed to have been used as saws; others are curved on both the outer and inner edges and may have been used as tanners' knives.

6. FLINT FLAKES and ARROW HEADS. The latter were set in wooden shafts. The mode in which the flint arrow heads were wrought will be seen more clearly from the annexed wood cut. We have here represented a piece of flint from which flakes have been struck off. In juxtaposition with this is a side view of a flake; next follows a front view of the same flake, showing its natural surface; and next to that again a flake half wrought into an arrow head, still exhibiting obvious traces of the original surface; and finally the trilateral arrow head in the



finished state with two of its sides notched. Besides the above mentioned, being what are most frequently met with, there are occasionally found lanceolate and heart-shaped specimens, like the one here delineated, generally speaking of very small size, and exactly similar to those which are still used by savage nations; they are inserted in a shaft, commonly a reed or cane, and fastened by means of cross ligatures. Here may also be noticed bone heads with very minute flint flakes inserted into them, which, it would seem, ought also to be referred to the class of arrows and harpoons. The flakes are of exactly the same description as those above delineated, but are extremely thin and minute, being fixed with a kind of cement into a groove cut along the edge of the piece of bone, as here delineated:

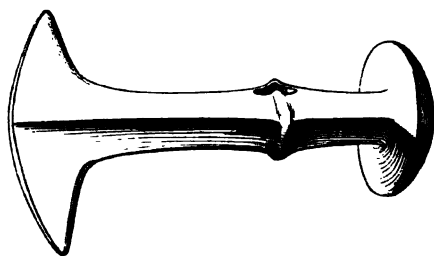


7. **AXES**, having the aperture for the handle near the back, which is either square or rounded. We occasionally meet also with cruciform specimens, which are, however, very rare.

8. **AX-HAMMERS**. This name has been given to some very finely wrought axes, having the orifice for the handle near one of the extremities, but in other respects approximating in shape to the hammer. Several varieties of them are met with, viz:

those which have a square back; those with a bulge instead of a back; those shaped like boats; and those which have the edge bent downward, with a knob instead of a back.

9. **HAMMERS**, having the orifice for the handle at, or near the middle. They are found with a semicircular edge and back, or, instead of the latter, they have occasionally a round straight



projecting knob, or one slightly drawn downward. They are also found wedge shaped, with a projecting shoulder and a round flat back without a knob; occasionally with the edge and back bent

downward; and finally with a sharp edge and rounded back. Axes and hammers have been found in a half finished state which had either no orifice for the handle, or one which was only half perforated; others again which had been broken at the orifice first formed, and then perforated anew.

10. **SLING STONES**, either with a groove cut round the middle, or with two grooves cut crosswise; in the latter case they have the shape of a ball somewhat flattened.



11. **SHUTTLE SHAPED STONES** with a groove cut in their edge, usually of the

shape represented in the annexed cut, and bearing traces of being worn in the middle of the sides. A specimen has been found having the groove on its edge cased with bronze.

12. **NUTS or KNOBS**, which are perforated and whereof some are round above and flat beneath, some pointed, and others rounded on both sides. In Germany the name of *Spindelsteine* has been given to them. Similar articles of glass or burnt clay are occasionally found in urns.

13. **DISKS or SHEAVES**, having a hole in the centre, either flat with a flat edge, or round edged with a raised rim round the central orifice.

14. **BALLS**, fashioned with great care, but not usually polished, most frequently of the size of an orange, occasionally much smaller.

15. **ANCHORS**, of which one star-shaped specimen has been found with a hole in the centre.

16. **CORN CRUSHERS**, used previously to the introduction or general use of handmills, and consisting of a large block of stone having its upper surface flat, and in the centre a circular cavity into which a smooth ball of stone was made to fit.

17. **TOUCHSTONES**, as they have been denominated, made out of a black close-grained species of slate, and apparently designed to be worn pendent. They are now often met with in very ancient graves, in which no traces of metal are discernible, for which reason the above appellation may not be the most appropriate.

It is probable that articles of stone may have been used also at a somewhat later period by less wealthy individuals. Stone anvils are believed to have been found on which articles of metal had been hammered, and which are consequently to be referred to a later period.

## B. URNS AND FUNERAL VESSELS.

These belong to a much more extended period than the articles of stone, and were used from the most remote down to the most recent periods of heathenism, even in times when it was customary to inter the corpse without cremation. Although the attempts hitherto made to classify them according to their age have not been without success, still the complete development of such a mode of classification would too much exceed our limits, so that we find it on the whole more convenient to arrange them according to the materials of which they are composed. These consist of:

1. **STONE.** Such specimens occur very rarely and are made of a softish kind of stone. Their shape is either quadrangular, resembling small stone chests constructed of several flat stones; or circular, which latter have occasionally an iron handle; or they are bowl shaped, and have been manufactured by the unaided hand; others have the form of a saucepan.

2. **BAKED CLAY.** No material was so commonly employed, or during so long a period. We accordingly find vessels of this material in every state of finish, from the simplest and rudest workmanship to the more highly finished; with few exceptions they have all been fabricated by the unassisted hand of the artist, without the aid of the potter's lathe; they are generally unglazed, and of the greatest variety of shapes, such as:

a) **VESSELS DESIGNED TO BE HUNG UP**, or carried suspended; they are entirely without a foot or stand, and cannot be set down unsupported. Specimens of this sort usually have lids of the same substance as the vessels themselves. They are found in the earliest sepulchres in the North, in which the bodies have not been subjected to cremation. A sort of white powder has been frequently observed adhering to them; they were doubtless intended to contain liquids.

b) **VESSELS DESIGNED TO BE CARRIED**, resembling the preceding, but still so fashioned as to admit of being set down. They are furnished with one or more ears, whence it may be seen that they were designed to be borne suspended by one or more strings.

c) **FLOWERPOT SHAPED VESSELS**, of many varieties, rarely of a large size.

d) **BOWL SHAPED VESSELS** of various sorts; some of which are at times placed inverted upon the funeral urn as a lid.

e) **CUP SHAPED**, with and without a handle.

f) **BEAKER SHAPED**, or vessels furnished with a foot or stand; the former appellation however is applicable only to the smaller vessels of this form; they have also been found of a large size, ornamented with zigzag figures as shown in the cut:





g) CAN SHAPED, with a handle.

h) PITCHER SHAPED, of many sorts from the rudest workmanship to those more artistically wrought. It was especially this sort that was used to preserve the burnt bones in. One variety with a projecting mouth resembles a jar, as here delineated.



i) BOTTLE SHAPED, with a long neck; some of these have been found in graves of the earliest

period; others of somewhat different workmanship have been found in those of the most recent date.

Besides these there are found:

k) OVAL AND OBLONG CLAY URNS, and others with compartments inside, which, however, are of rare occurrence.

l) CLOSED URNS, which, though of very rare occurrence, have nevertheless been found both in the North and in Germany. Most of the funeral urns may indeed be said to be closed, the

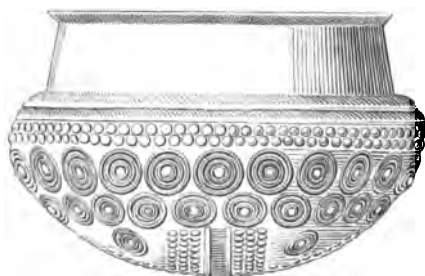
lid having been found fastened to them with cement; but the



case is different with the sort here alluded to, the entire urn being closed, with merely an opening in the side which was shut by means of a door that is held fast by bolts passing through rings. This remarkable shape is here delineated.

No less diversified are the LIDS belonging to these sorts of urns, some being shaped like a small disk and placed loose on the top of the urn; others having a pendulous rim fitting to the inside of the urn, and others again with one fitting round the outside. We also occasionally find, as stated above, a species of flat bowl placed inverted on the urn as a lid, and sometimes flat stones used for the same purpose. In some places the burnt bones have been found collected into a small heap on the floor of the sepulchral chamber, and the urn placed over them in an inverted position.

3. METAL viz. either of: a) GOLD, seldom very large or



thick, but adorned with ornaments as in the annexed delineation; some of these bear traces of having been furnished with handles. b) Of SILVER, in the form of beakers, but of very rare

occurrence in the North; the ornaments are executed in a style wholly different from that of the specimens above mentioned.

but corresponding with those which are known to have been used in the later periods of heathenism. c) BRONZE, of many different sorts, occasionally with an interior coating of tin and some of them resembling those made of gold, being designed to be hung up, and furnished with a lid which was closed by means of a slider. Where the latter was of metal it is generally found either entire, or at least in fragments; but in many instances it was made of wood or some other substance, and in such cases it has almost always mouldered away. Here we may also take notice of vessels with a handle, resembling a saucepan, most of which were no doubt manufactured by Romans, or after Roman models, specimens exactly similar being frequently met with in Italy; also of strainers and large metallic bowls or dishes, which are sometimes furnished with a low foot, and which have been taken for sacrificial bowls, about which more hereafter; but some are occasionally found without any foot, and would seem to have been merely the interior metal casing of some larger vessel of wood. d) IRON, shaped like bowls, the bottom of one entire piece, the remainder being composed of small rectangular pieces rivetted to each other. These have also handles.

4. GLASS, belonging to the rarer specimens and doubtless of great value in the olden time. They are found of various shapes, but not of very large size, some of them rounded at the bottom, being of thick glass with ornaments ground on them; others long and conical with external glass ornaments in relief; others resembling a large beaker encompassed with a net of ornaments in relief, and others again like a teacup without a handle, having a bend inward at the upper part, and a lip curved outward. Glass drinking horns have been discovered even in graves. Along with glass urns are often found gold bracelets, a proof that they must have belonged to wealthy people. It has been thought that traces may occasionally be discerned of their having been inserted in wooden vessels. We have no evidence that they were intended to preserve the ashes of human bodies, and besides they appear to be rather too

small for such a purpose. After glass has lain a long time in the earth a crust frequently forms over it which gives it the appearance of mother of pearl.

5. **WOOD**, consisting chiefly of small buckets, the bottom being of one entire piece, and the rest composed of staves like cooper's work of the present day, but much thinner and finer. They were mounted or girt with metal hoops and had metal handles. In many cases all that is now found in a state of preservation is the handle and part of the mounting, the rest having entirely mouldered away. Occasionally however in the stone sepulchres of Norway principally, and in the sandhills of Denmark, they have been found so entire as to enable us to form a distinct notion of them.

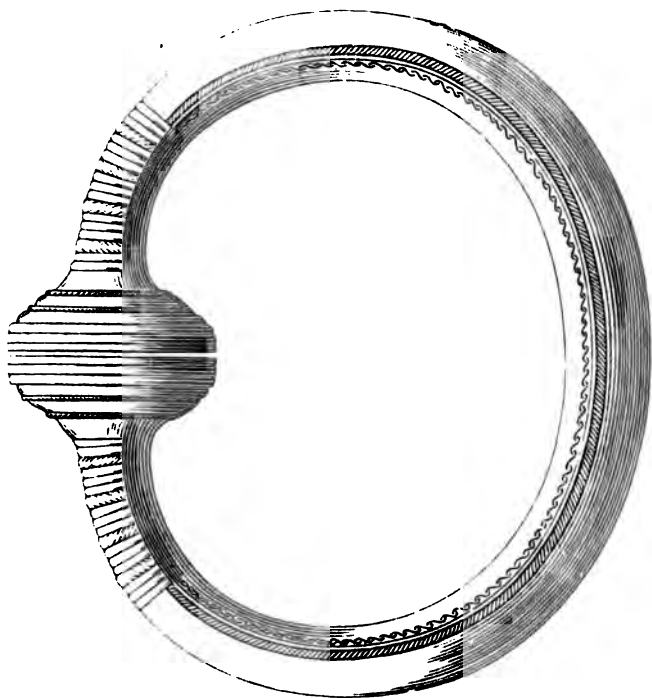
We may as a supplement to this class add divers specimens of skeletons and charred bones found in sepulchral mounds and in morasses, and indicating the races of the human family to which the ancient inhabitants of the North belonged. They moreover show that it was no unfrequent practice to inter animals along with the bodies of the deceased, not merely horses and dogs, but occasionally stags, nay even birds. In some funereal vessels peculiar substances are met with, which merit being preserved for the purpose of ascertaining what they originally were by means of chemical analysis.

#### C. ARTICLES SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN CONNECTED WITH PAGAN WORSHIP.

1. **SMALL FIGURES**, which are conjectured to have been a kind of idols, and are of very rare occurrence. It is possible, however, that some of them were merely ornaments. They have been found of bronze, of a mixture of zinc and other metals, of bone and of baked clay. The best accounts which we possess of the temple idols, show that they were made of wood, and occasionally arrayed in garments, wherefore we can scarcely expect to find any such remaining in a state of preservation; on the other hand there have been found

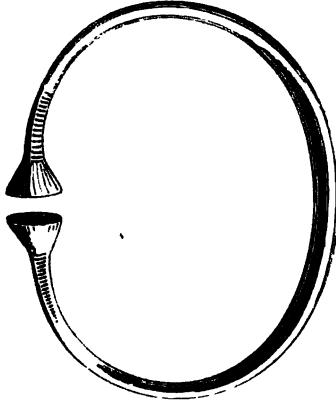
ornaments, for instance a girdle of gold, so constructed that we cannot suppose them to have been designed for human beings, but for the decoration of an idol. In some sepulchral mounds, more especially in Norway, small figures of animals have also been found, such as horses, rams etc.

2. LARGE RINGS, which are supposed to have been sacred.



It would not appear that they could have been worn round the wrist, for the two opposite knobs which form the uniting point of the ring render them ill suited for such a purpose. They are moreover too small to have been worn round the head or neck. To exhibit their shape a delineation of one of them is given above of the full size. As they are besides often of pure gold and very massive, so that in ancient times they

must have been very costly, it has accordingly been conjectured that in them we may recognize the sacred rings which are often mentioned as having been employed in administering oaths in the pagan times.



3. **SYMBOLICAL MATTERS**, chiefly found in urns near the top, such as rings of the same shape as the ones above mentioned, but much smaller, being of the size represented in the annexed cut, consequently much too small to have been worn round the wrist, and too large for the finger; further, swords which exactly resemble those of bronze, but are only four or five inches in length; likewise

daggers like the one here represented of the full size; moreover miniature models or imitations in amber, of stone axes and hammers, which, however, it is very possible, may have been used as trinkets or ornaments. As these articles have been found in graves, it seems probable that they had a special import and were symbols of the originals, which it was perhaps deemed desirable to retain; we know the importance and value that was attached to weapons. It is not articles of the later ages of paganism that we find thus imitated, but objects from what may be called the bronze age.



4. **LARGE FLAT DISHES** or vessels of bronze, which are usually furnished with a foot of turner's work. They are supposed to have been the so called *Offerboller* (sacrificial bowls), into which the blood of the victims was poured.

5. **STRAINERS** of metal fitted into vessels of clay, or other corresponding vessels of bronze.

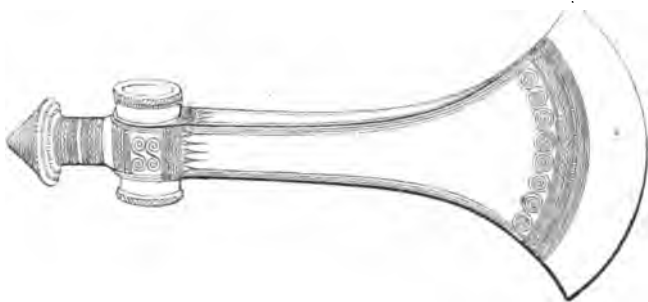
6. **INCENSE CAKES** and **INCENSE**, the former being round with a hole or perforation in the middle.

**D. WEAPONS AND OTHER ARTICLES OF METAL  
RELATING TO WAR.**

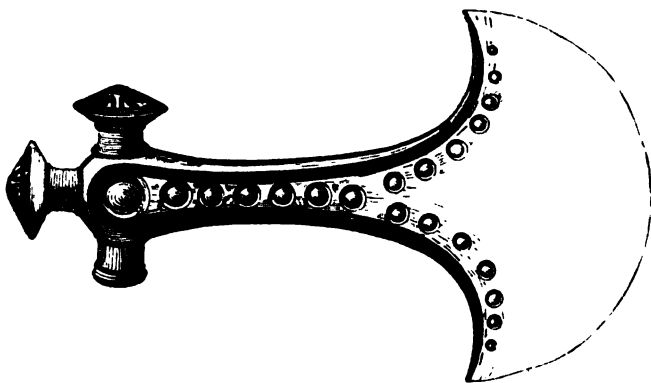
**OFFENSIVE WEAPONS.**

1. **AXES**, either of copper, or of copper with an iron edge, belonging most probably to the period when iron was dearer than copper; or of iron, which latter are the most recent. Metals being, as is well known, very expensive, stone continued for a long time to be used for heavy articles such as axes, at the same time that the knife and sword were of copper, for which reason there have been found comparatively few axes of metal.

2. **AX-HAMMERS** of bronze. A delineation of a massive one of a considerable size and weight is here annexed. A

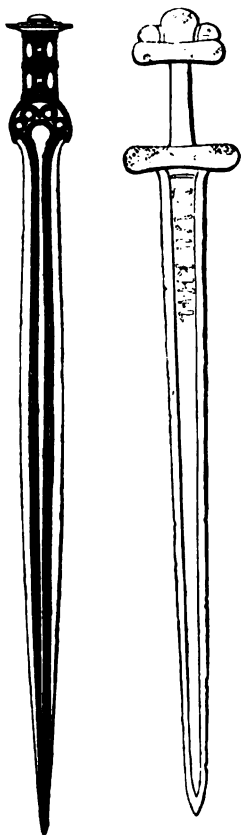


weapon such as this, it has been supposed, was worn by the leader. Another specimen still more splendid and of a larger size is here



delineated. It is inlaid with gold, but the ax itself is cast over a curious form of clay, is very thin, and could not, like the preceding, be fit for use in battle. It has been conjectured accordingly that this sort of elaborately wrought axes must either have been designed for idols, or employed as badges of dignity.

3. SWORDS of BRONZE or of IRON, specimens of which



are here exhibited. The former are, of course, the most ancient. The hilts were of various kinds. The most ancient are supposed to be those of bronze into which the blade was fastened merely by two rivets; subsequently the rivets were increased in number and applied in a similinear form, as is shown in the annexed delineation, by which means the fastening was rendered more secure. The hilts were occasionally of wood, bone, or buck's horn, in which cases they were almost always found to be entirely mouldered away, nothing, in most instances, being left in a state of preservation, but the tang on which they were fastened. No guard is found on the more ancient swords, but a transition to it may be seen on such as are of iron. In regard to the hilts of iron swords, they have been found partly of silver, or inlaid with silver, or with gold chains attached to them. Along with the sword we may notice the sheath and belt, which in most instances are decayed, being

usually of wood or leather, as also the ferrule and other mountings.

4. DAGGERS and poniards of bronze and iron.

5. SPEARS of bronze and iron. It is on the iron spears



that we first discern hooks. The shaft is never found, as it was made of wood, but the ferrule is met with, and its distance from the spear enables us to determine the length of the shaft itself. There is a particular sort of spear, called „Skæpteflættet”, so termed from the extremity of the shaft being split so as to admit the insertion of the spear head. Here we may add the weapon called „morning star”, of which a bronze specimen has been found.

6. **ARROWHEADS**, of bronze or iron. The most ancient were so made as to be inserted in the shaft; subsequently they were so constructed as that the shaft might be inserted into them. Hitherto no bows have been found belonging to the pagan times of Scandinavia.

#### DEFENSIVE WEAPONS.

7. **SHIELDS** have occasionally been found consisting entirely of bronze, of a round shape, with the edge or rim bent over a thick wire. But as they were generally made of thin layers of wood and leather, all that we usually find is the metal mountings and ornaments appertaining to them, more especially a large, round umbo, or boss with a projecting point, which was placed in the centre of the shield. They were of various descriptions: The long buckler, which was used for protection against arrows and javelins, or when scaling a wall or rampart, was of large dimensions. The pointed shield was pointed at the lower end; The target, or parrying shield (to which class belong the above mentioned round ones of bronze) was used in close combat; it was not usually of large dimensions, being held in the outstretched hand and not borne on the arm. To make room for the hand there was generally placed in the centre a boss or bowl-shaped piece of metal, across which was applied a band or hoop by way of handle, being in most cases of wood.

8. **HELMETS** and **COATS OF MAIL** with other articles appertaining to armour are very rarely found. Fragments of bronze helmets have however been occasionally discovered overlaid

with gold. Instead of a vizor there is often found on the helmet a prolongation of that part which fitted over the forehead, by means of which the nose was protected. On a piece which covered the chin there have occasionally been found two upright pieces of metal, somewhat resembling large tusks, which served to defend the cheeks. Remains of coats of chain mail made of bronze have also been found. Here may also be mentioned:

9. HORNS or war trumpets of bronze, of a very large size, and consisting usually of two parts, whereof one was inserted into the other and of the appearance of which an idea may be formed from the annexed cut. They are generally found along with bronze swords and belong consequently to the more ancient period of paganism, as is also indicated by the ornaments. The inferior extremity is adorned with a circular disc, the anterior side of which is ornamented; from the mouthpiece depend ornaments of bronze and on some of them there are contrivances for the insertion of cords. On one specimen a long metal chain is preserved.



They have been found in bogs in several parts of Denmark so well preserved that they may still be sounded.

#### ARTICLES CONNECTED WITH HORSEMANSHIP.

10. **POMMELS** of bronze representing the heads of animals.

11. **SPURS**, having no rowels but only with a goad; those made of bronze are very small, those of iron larger.

12. **BRIDLES**, commonly consisting of two rings and a cross bar for the bit. They are found both of bronze and of iron; also,

13. **STIRRUPS**; these are usually with narrow irons; the straps belonging to them were on the contrary very broad.

#### E. ORNAMENTS.

1. **GOLD BRACTEATES**, that is, pieces of gold having the shape of coins, stamped on one side and furnished with rings, and which were occasionally used as amulets. Some of them have runic inscriptions. They have been found varying in diameter from nearly four inches to half an inch; sometimes a number are found on one spot together with beads, or fitted to necklaces of gold. Instead of these, real coins were occasionally used after having been furnished with a rim and an eye.

2. **BEADS and NECKLACES.** Beads have been found of glass mosaic and of glass paste. A peculiar kind of these was intended to imitate gold beads, and consists of a nucleus of glass, over which is laid a thin coating of gold and over that again a shell of glass; they have also been found of rock crystal and other species of hard stone; of a kind of fine burnt clay of various colours; of gold or other metals; the last mentioned are very thin and internally filled up with clay for the purpose of economizing the metal and rendering them lighter; they are also frequently found of amber, in which case they are often mixed with others of glass mosaic. Along with beads have often been found metal spirals



of the same thickness and appearance as the one here delineated. Chains for the neck are found of various patterns curiously plaited of gold, silver and

other metal wire; and sometimes they are composed of a number of hollow gold cylinders to which gold bracteates are attached. Here we may also notice pieces of amber, in some instances fashioned by art, in others, especially when of larger dimensions, in a rude state and merely perforated; to these have further been added bits of glass paste and stone intended to be set, or rather all that is left where the metal setting is lost.

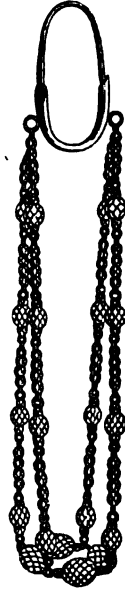
3. RINGS of many kinds, to be worn about the head, round the neck, the arms, the wrists, on the fingers, the ankle, nay, rings have even been found which it is supposed were intended to be worn round the waist. We will here content ourselves with giving a delineation of one particular specimen of the multifarious sorts of bracelets, directing attention at the same time to the peculiarity of their construction which did not admit of their being taken off, but only of being widened a



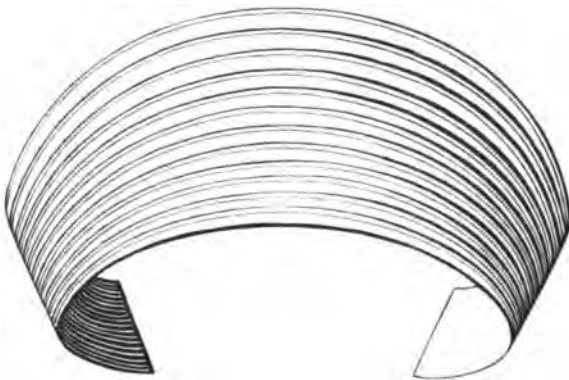
little, in case of the individual becoming more corpulent, or wishing to wear them over a dress. Rings have been frequently found still encircling the arm bones, on which signs of rust were discernible. The collars were of various peculiar sorts, some being for instance formed of two thick and massive, curved bars of gold, which were laid over each other, looking, at the fore part of the throat, as if the individual wore two rings one over the other. Another sort was open and concave

on that side which rested on the breast, the concavity having in all probability being filled with some soft substance such as wool. Here we may also notice rings from which fragments had been broken off and used as money. Rings have been found of gold, electrum, silver, bronze, tin, or copper, some overlaid with a plate of gold, and some inlaid with leaden ornaments.

4. PENDANTS, like the one here delineated, and other ornaments for the ear, are but rarely found in the sepulchral mounds of the North. In the neighbouring countries chains have been found to which were attached the teeth of animals of a small size, and which were inserted by means of a hook into the lobe of the ear. They belong, as far as we can judge, to a period more remote than does the specimen here represented.



ORNAMENTS FOR THE HAIR, consisting, besides rings, of diadem-shaped ornaments made to fasten behind, of which an idea may be formed from the delineation here given; further, of a combination of flat semilunar pieces of metal, supposed to have been worn at the back part of the head; of a sort of narrow band of thin



gold plate, conjectured to be the so called *gullhlað*, which were used to be bound across the brow; we annex here a specimen



of this description; of a sort of coronet notched after the manner shown in the annexed cut, and which, it may be observed, from



the circumstance of their being hollow, are not so heavy as might be supposed from their size and appearance; of combs, whereof specimens have been found in heathen sepulchres, of bronze, horn, and of bone, the latter curiously composed of a number of pieces; hair pins of a variety of shapes, of bronze, having the head overlaid with gold, others of silver with gold heads, sometimes half an ell in length, a size which attests our ancestors' predilection for a long and handsome head of hair, a fact which is also corroborated by history. A delineation of



a specimen of this description is here annexed. There was also a peculiar sort having the upper end formed like the letter S.

6. BUCKLES, some of which, being the more ancient specimens, consist of two pieces of metal of a round, or oval shape, connected together by a band, and which from their resemblance have been called spectacle shaped; others, resembling the fibulæ

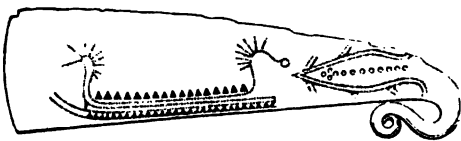
of the Romans and therefore called by that name, are curved and furnished with a spiral spring terminating in a point which is inserted into a sort of eye; others again, supposed to have been worn on the breast as ornaments by women, are usually oval or round, of open work, two of one sort being generally found together. Some specimens are also met with in the form of a trefoil leaf. The fashion after which the two latter sort are wrought would seem to warrant our referring these two ornaments to the last period of heathenism in the North, which is also corroborated by the circumstance of similar specimens being found in pagan sepulchres in Iceland, the settlement of which was first commenced a little more than a century prior to the promulgation of christianity in the North. We think it necessary to remark here that in ancient times they were ignorant of the method of gilding which was afterwards practised, but made use of thin gold plates with which articles of bronze or copper were overlaid.

7. **BUTTONS** of bronze, most frequently double, of the same kind nearly as is still used by the lower classes for studs; of bone like those here delineated, through which a string was drawn with a knot at the end.

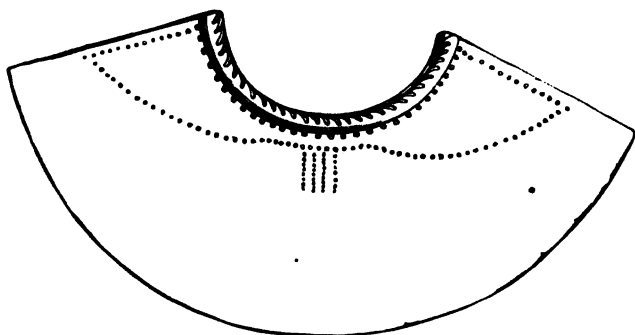


## F. IMPLEMENTS OF OTHER MATERIALS THAN STONE.

1. **KNIVES** of copper of various shapes; the more ancient thin, those especially which are not cast; an occasional specimen has been found with the figures of ships, as also, though more rarely, fishes and other objects, as shown in

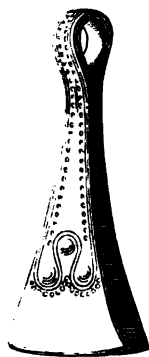


the annexed cut, engraved on it; curved knives with the edge on the inside, and crescent-shaped with the edge outside as in the specimen represented on the next page. This sort, it is supposed, was designed for the purpose of cutting skin and leather, for which they



seem suited. The ancient remains along with which these knives are found, and in general the endeavour to make a knife with as small a quantity of metal as possible, are indicative of a remote antiquity. The specimens which are believed to be later, are larger and were furnished with a handle. Those still more recent are of iron. Knives of iron are more rare, and in a few instances, bear a great resemblance to the Norægian whittle.

2. SAWS of bronze and iron, the most ancient very small, and made, like the stone saws, to be inserted into wood by means of some points placed for that purpose.



3. TWEEZERS, or small pincers in appearance like the specimen here represented; they are usually of bronze, more rarely of iron; in some rare instances they are furnished with a bolt or ring to keep them closed. They are found almost always along with an awl and a small knife, and hence they are conjectured to have been implements which were used in sewing at a remote period of antiquity, when people's dress consisted chiefly of skins stitched together by means of tendons; this conjecture is corroborated by their not being found, or at least very rarely, along with needles having eyes. Another opinion concerning them is, that they were some kind of surgical instrument, and that



they were also employed for the purpose of plucking the hairs out of the beard, as is still practised among the natives of Chili with an instrument exactly similar.

4. **AWLS and PINS** of bronze or bone; some of these specimens, referable to later periods, have eyes (the oldest without eye, the next with the eye in the middle, the later as we now have them), and were certainly used as needles.

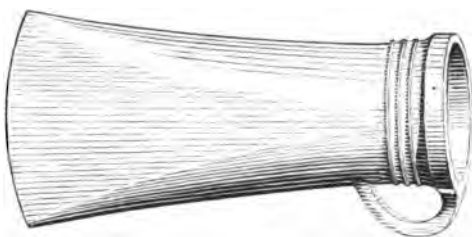
5. **IMPLEMENTS FOR THE MAKING OF FISHING NETS**, as has



been conjectured. The specimen above represented, which resembles a bodkin, is, like all those which have been found, of bone.

6. **SCISSORS** of bronze and of iron, shaped like the wool shears of the present day.

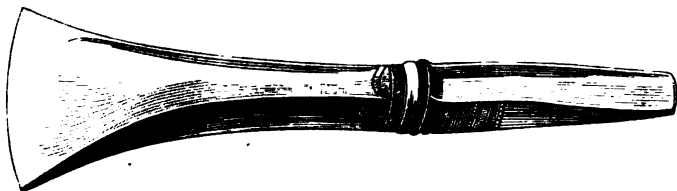
7. **CELTS**, a rather diminutive implement of bronze, somewhat widened at the edge and made so as to have the handle inserted into it; some specimens



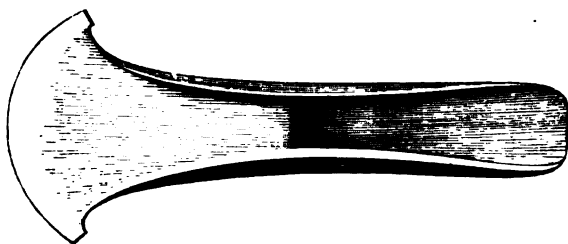
have a small eye at the top on one side; the one above delineated is of the latter description. Remains of the wooden handle have been found in them; one specimen has also been found of iron, but of much larger dimensions. They are found in nearly all European countries, and in the North in great number, and have been referred on good grounds to the more remote periods when metal was precious. In England they are supposed to be derived from Celtic nations, and hence the name given to them which we have here retained.

8. **PALSTAVES**, a larger and heavier implement, likewise of bronze, shaped like a large chisel widened at the edge, and made to be inserted into a cleft handle which was made fast

to it with a leathern band. An ornamented specimen of one of these is seen here in a cut of half the real dimensions. These



too, which seem to have superseded the celts at a period somewhat later, have been found in almost every country of Europe. Another sort, at present made of iron and of a larger size, are still used under the same appellation in Iceland as a sort of pick or crow, bearing an exact resemblance to the annexed ancient specimen of bronze:



#### G. HOUSEHOLD UTENSILS.

1. DRINKING VESSELS, a) Drinking horns, which have been found made of horn, of gold, and of glass; these have always been reckoned among the specimens of the greatest rarity. Two however, and perhaps three, of gold, have been found in the North. In order that some notion may be formed of the appearance of these horns, we annex a delineation of one of them, in viewing which, it must however be observed that the length of the specimen here represented was one ell nine inches, being 4 inches in diameter at the mouth; moreover that it weighed 6 lb 6 $\frac{1}{2}$  oz of the finest gold and was

composed of an inner piece, on the outside of which were applied rings representing a variety of objects. On the upper rim of another similar horn of gold there was found a Runic inscription.

b) Beakers and cups of glass and silver.

c) Parts of bowls in which drinkables were placed on the table, viz. such portions as were of metal; such parts of them on the other hand as were of wood have almost always rotted away.

2. VASES, cups and other similar vessels of bronze and silver.

3. SPOONS of bronze, silver, and bone, and of a variety of shapes.

4. FORKS of bone, viz. quadrangular pieces of bone, having one end pointed, which were inserted into a handle; they have been

found along with knives by the side of remnants of victuals.

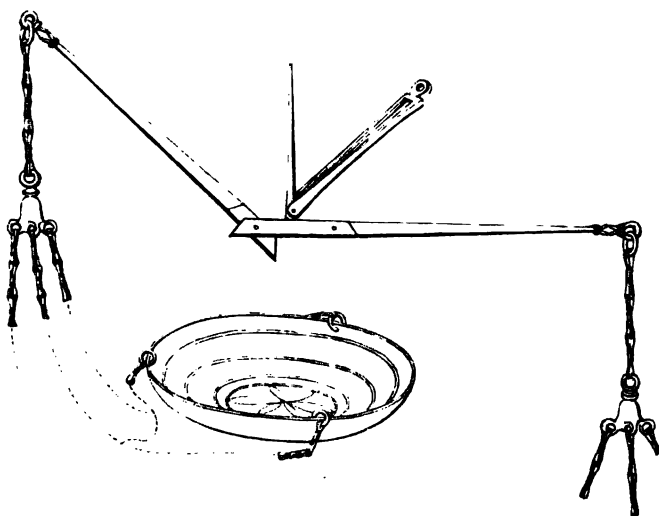
5. KEYS, usually of bronze.



6. SCALES with a balance made of a mixture of copper and zinc; they have been found of a simpler construction with a balance, but without a properly defined tongue, as is shown below :



but also of a more perfect make with a tongue as in the specimen here delineated, which is made to fold up so as to be



carried in a little box. Specimens of this description have sometimes been found in the sepulchral mounds of the North. The weights are of iron with a coating of bronze, and of lead.

7. Chairs of wood, found in sepulchral chambers, but which immediately crumbled into dust before they could be examined or delineated.

#### H. SUNDRY ARTICLES,

such as CHESSMEN, DICE OF BONE, FRAGMENTS OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS, for instance of a harp, with other things of the

use of which we are still ignorant, for instance a sort of hollow metal nails or bolts, ornamented and furnished on one side with a little eye. Here may also be noticed the TÛTULI, as they have been termed (*Hütchen*), of which a specimen is here annexed of the full size, though it must be observed that they are in most instances of smaller dimensions. From the



cross bar placed inside, it has been conjectured that they were fastened by a strap; this is now proved to be actually the case, specimens having been found with the remains of such a strap in them; they may possibly have been worn as ornaments. They are made of bronze and are found along with antiquities of the remoter periods.

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## OF THE DIFFERENT PERIODS TO WHICH THE HEATHEN ANTIQUITIES MAY BE REFERRED.

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Before proceeding to speak of the antiquities from the christian times of the North, we will cast a retrospective glance on the articles which have just been mentioned, offering a few hints with respect to the different ages to which they may with probability be referred. Our collections are however still too recent and our facts too few for the drawing of conclusions with full degree of confidence in the greatest number of cases. The remarks which we now proceed to offer must therefore be

viewed merely in the light of conjectures, destined to be confirmed or rectified in proportion as a more general attention is devoted to the subject. To facilitate the view, we shall give to each of the different periods, whose limits, however, cannot be accurately defined, a separate appellation.

THE AGE OF STONE, or that period when weapons and implements were made of stone, wood, bone, or some such material, and during which very little or nothing at all was known of metals. Even if we suppose that some of the stone articles were in a later age used either on account of the costliness of metal, or from their being dedicated to the celebration of sacred rites, and that they continued in consequence to be of the same shape and material as in the remoter periods of antiquity, still they are so frequently found in the North, and moreover in such a multitude of instances with obvious traces of being worn by use and several times ground afresh, that there can be no question of a time having existed when these articles were in common use in the North. That the stone age is the earliest in which we find our regions to have been inhabited by human beings, seems established beyond all doubt, as is also the fact that the people must have borne a resemblance to savages. It is very natural that in different regions, that particular species of stone should have been employed which was of most common occurrence and at the same time suited to the fabrication of stone implements; accordingly, flint was most frequently employed in Denmark; in those parts of Sweden and Norway where flint is not met with, they made a partial use of other species of stone, which sometimes had an influence on the shape of the implement. In the most northern parts of Sweden and Norway stone objects seldom or never occur, and it would seem as if those regions in earlier times were but thinly inhabited, or not at all.

It was about the period when metals first came, gradually and no doubt sparingly, to be used in the North, that the large sepulchral chambers of the North would seem to have been constructed. In these, as has been before remarked, the bodies have been

most frequently found unburnt, in many instances with rudely fashioned urns beside them; articles of metal being very rarely met with, and at all events but little of bronze or gold; of silver or iron nothing whatever, but almost exclusively objects of stone and bone; the ornaments chiefly of amber. Articles of clothing seem to have been made chiefly of the skins of animals. The succeeding period, we are of opinion, ought to be called:

THE AGE OF BRONZE, in which weapons and cutting implements were made of copper or bronze, and nothing at all, or but very little was known of iron or silver. Not in the North only, but also in the countries of the South, it will be found that the metal of which mention is first made, and which first came into use was copper, either pure, or, as it was frequently used in ancient times, with a small addition of tin for the purpose of hardening it, to which alloy the name of bronze has been given. It was not till a much later period that they became acquainted with iron, the reason of which seems to be that copper is found in such a state as to be far more easily distinguishable as a metal than iron, which, before it can be wrought, must first undergo the process of smelting and purifying by a strong heat, an operation of which in the earliest ages they must have been ignorant. We should assuredly commit a great mistake in supposing the bronze articles to be imitations of those from the palmy days of the Romans, or that they were fabricated at that period in southern countries and thence conveyed through the channel of traffic to Germany and the North. It is to be remarked that by far the greatest number of antiquities of this description are found precisely in the more distant countries, for instance in the North and in Ireland, where it may reasonably be supposed that contact with the Romans was slightest. Moreover it was not before the conquest of Gaul by Julius Cæsar and his advance to the Rhine that a firm and permanent connexion was formed with the interior of Germany, but long before that time the Romans had their weapons and cutting implements of iron. It would seem that an earlier culture,

long before iron came into general use, was diffused over the greater part of Europe, the produce of which was in a great measure alike in regions very far apart. On a close examination of the cutting implements and weapons of bronze and of the connexions in which they are found in the North, the conviction will be forced upon us more and more that they originated and are derived from that earlier culture, and that they are also of very remote antiquity in the countries of the South. If we assume that articles were obtained from other countries, or that they were imitated, it follows as a matter of course that they must at that time have been in use in those countries, and it would be absurd to suppose that the Germans should have adopted any thing after the Romans, or received any thing from them, the use of which had been long discontinued by the latter. On the other hand later discoveries and improvements might, when international connexions were dissevered, or when these were only the result of migrations, easily have continued to be unknown to a people who had indeed been acquainted with the earlier culture, but had themselves made no great progress in civilisation, and who by reason of their remoteness and of the length of the period of their separation, had remained ignorant of the subsequent improvements and discoveries of other cultivated nations. Such specimens as are found in those countries will accordingly tend to elucidate the nature and appearance of similar objects of very remote antiquity in regions where the arts made a comparatively considerable progress at a much earlier period than in the North.

To this age belong the stone chests and the small sepulchres covered with heaps of stones; this was strictly speaking the age of cremation, the larger sepulchral chambers being no longer required. The burnt bones were kept in urns or deposited in stone chests. In the urns of this period we very often find at the top a pin, tweezers, with a small knife of bronze, and to this age belong also the celts and palstaves of bronze which are of so frequent occurrence. Articles of gold



and of electrum are likewise found, but never of silver. No instance is known to us of writing being found on any specimen belonging to the bronze age, although the workmanship in other respects evinces such a degree of skill as would lead us to suppose that the art of writing could not have been unknown at that period. It does not by any means follow that because they had metal, they should have entirely ceased to employ stone, and that so much the less, since metal was doubtless expensive at first, for which reason they strove to avoid using it in the fabrication of heavy articles. Most articles of metal were at this period fabricated by the process of casting, but when they were hammered we can scarcely err in supposing that operation to have been performed with a stone hammer on a stone anvil.

THE AGE OF IRON is the third and last period of the heathen times, in which iron was used for those articles to which that metal is eminently suited, and in the fabrication of which it came to be employed as a substitute for bronze. To such articles as they would especially endeavour to procure of hardened iron, belong of course all sorts of cutting weapons and implements. On the other hand bronze was at this period fully as much used for ornaments, handles, and some sorts of domestic utensils, such as spoons and the like. From such specimens of bronze it cannot therefore by any means be inferred that an article belongs to the previous age unless that should be indicated by the shape and ornaments and the altered proportion of alloy. If we suppose an emigration to the North of the people from the shores of the Black Sea, about the time of Julius Cæsar or somewhat later, it is likely that the immigrants who were acquainted with iron, which at that period was in common use in the South, may have brought it hither along with them to the North. It has been believed that there was a period of transition in which iron was more precious than copper and when it was used very sparingly; axes, for instance, werethen made partly of copper to which was added an edge of iron; daggers were

made of bronze, likewise with an edge on both sides of iron. On one specimen of an ax which is believed to be from this transition period, consequently from the very earliest times of the iron age, an inscription has been found in Runic characters. Such specimens being however extremely rare, this period was not in all probability of long duration. That the transition to iron should have proceeded in this way, however, is a point not yet fully established, this combination of metals not having been unknown at later periods when it was employed for ornaments. When people's attention was once attracted to iron ore and the purposes to which it might be applied, that metal which is found in such abundance in Norway and Sweden must soon have superseded the one previously in use. A different arrangement had now been given to the sepulchral chambers, wooden structures being found within the sepulchral mounds of this age. The bodies were sometimes burnt; but they were also frequently interred without cremation, oftentimes seated on chairs, and occasionally the caparizoned horse of the deceased was buried along with him. During this period, which goes down to the introduction of Christianity, they had silver, and also vessels of glass. Glass beads however would seem to have been brought hither at a very early period, perhaps even in the stone age, just as we still find these trinkets to be the very first which savages covet and obtain from civilized nations. We cannot, it is true, exhibit specimens of any thing like architectural remains from that period and might naturally be led to believe that it was through intercourse with neighbouring nations and frequent expeditions into other countries that many objects were introduced into our countries of the North. Meanwhile there are historical facts which must not be lost sight of, such for instance as the construction of vessels of the size and description of those built in these countries by our ancestors, which required such a degree of skill in other crafts also, that it cannot be doubted but that they must have possessed no little degree of dexterity at least in some branches of the mechanic arts. The skill of their smiths is often men-

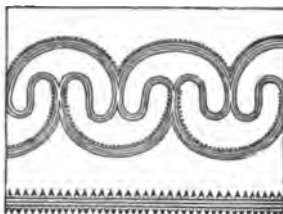
tioned, and they were held in high estimation, seeing that great importance was attached to weapons of a superior quality, while trinkets and ornaments were in all probability manufactured by the same artists that fabricated weapons and armour.

Towards determining the exact age of antiquities, or at least the period to which they belong, there is still another guide which hitherto has been but little followed with respect to the antiquities of the North, viz. an investigation of the FORMS of the objects and of the ORNAMENTS with which they were decorated, with a view that by a careful comparison and by accurately noting what sorts are generally found together, we may ascertain the order in which the successive changes took place, and thus determine the periods to which a mere inspection of the ornaments will authorize us to assign the object. But here also it is to be regretted that our facts in general are too few in number and our observations too recent. All that we can at present do therefore is to offer some sketches in the hope that subsequent efforts may be successful in defining and filling up the outlines.

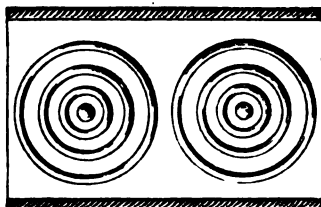
The ornaments found on STONE ANTIQUITIES are very insignificant, consisting in most cases merely of a sort of flames given to the object in hewing it, stripes, or the like. Such few specimens of carving or sculpture as have been found in sepulchral chambers and upon rocks, and which would seem especially to belong to the earlier periods, are nothing more than rude outlines bearing a sort of similarity to the hieroglyphics of savage nations.

In THE AGE OF BRONZE, on the other hand, we find the ornaments in a state of perfect development, and of so marked a character as to furnish a criterion which in most cases will enable us with tolerable certainty to determine the articles belonging to that age, and more especially to distinguish them from such as are referable to a subsequent period. They do not indeed appear to have been often changed, as we meet only with varieties of the same sort. We here subjoin specimens of those which are of most frequent occurrence:

UNDULATING ORNAMENTS:

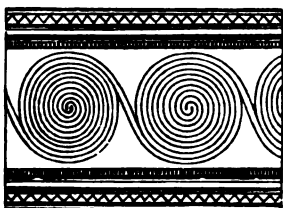


ANNULAR ORNAMENTS.

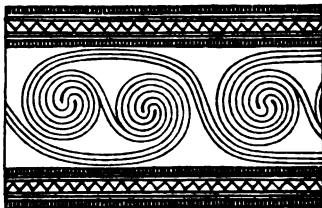


Of the first of these there are numerous varieties. The second sort is still more common, and would seem, like the former, to belong to the more ancient; there are also of the latter, (though in the main resembling the one delineated) lesser varieties with respect to size, the number of rings, the central points etc.

SPIRAL ORNAMENTS:



DOUBLE SPIRAL ORNAMENTS.

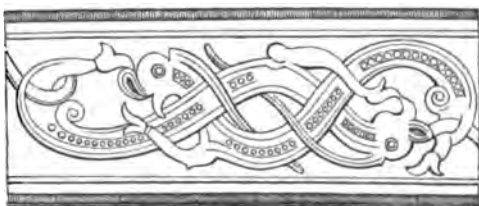


The former seem to have sprung from the annular ornaments, while the compound form the transition to those which follow.

In THE IRON AGE, or last period of heathenism, the following two sorts, in particular, were common:

SERPENTINE ORNAMENTS:

DRAGON ORNAMENTS.



Runic stones are in manifold instances ornamented with such as are here represented, the inscription being placed in the

figure of the serpent itself; but they are found just as often on trinkets and other articles of the period above mentioned as well of bronze as of other substances. The specimen above delineated is wrought on a gold bracteate. A number of facts have shown that the curiously plaited articles of gold, silver and other metals which have been frequently found in the North are referable to this period. In the latest pagan and earliest christian times the serpents were commonly replaced by dragons and other imaginary animals, and our most ancient edifices are decorated with ornaments of this description which seem to have been in vogue throughout a great part of Europe, till they were superseded by the chaster Gothic taste with its sculptured foliage and pointed ornaments.

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## ARTICLES FROM THE CHRISTIAN PERIOD.

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The christian middle ages of the North are reckoned from the general diffusion of christianity about the year 1000, to the epoch of the reformation, which in Denmark and Norway took place in 1536, and in Sweden somewhat later. It is only of late years, when an opportunity has been afforded of comparing and arranging a greater number of objects and of collating them with the results obtained from the study of architecture and inscriptions, that we also have begun in our collections to divide this long space of more than 500 years into periods, as has been done with the heathen antiquities. Here too the fashion of the ornaments and style of the workmanship have shown us the way to ascertain with a tolerable degree of accuracy to which period the objects should be referred. Another important aid has been discovered in the inscriptions which are now frequently met with, and which, even though they do not contain the year, or make any mention of particular persons,

do still however, from the gradual change in the form of the characters, in some degree serve us as a guide. As a preliminary step, objects belonging to the space of time above mentioned have however as yet only been divided into two periods, viz. those which belong to the so called rounded arch style and those belonging to the pointed arch style. It is characteristic of the elder, or rounded arch style, that we may still trace therein many remains of a vitiated Roman style, into which serpents and dragons were introduced as ornaments, and that there was something massive in the whole. This first period grew out of the heathen times during which the fashion had already sprung up, and it was of longer duration in the more remote and sequestered regions, as in Iceland and in certain vale districts of Norway and Sweden; but in the rest of the North it is supposed to have been gradually superseded in the 13<sup>th</sup> century by the pointed arch style, which, with its ornaments of foliage and united columns had been previously carried to the highest pitch of perfection and beauty in France, England and Germany, from whence it first came to us and was employed in the construction of churches and thence extended to every thing else. Of these periods we possess in our collections:

**A. OBJECTS CONNECTED WITH CATHOLIC WORSHIP.**

1. **ANTEMENSALES**, altar tablets, or slabs, some of them belonging to churches, others being domestic altars, or altaria portatilia as they were termed, which often were not more than a few inches in size; vestments worn at the altar.

2. **CRUCIFIXES** and church standards or ensigns.

3. **IMAGES OF SAINTS**; relics and other similar objects were occasionally deposited in the head of the image, a hole having been bored in it, which was closed by a peg.

4. **RELICS** and **SHRINES**, the latter of many varieties, as in the form of houses, human arms, crosses. A peculiar sort are those which are found immured in altars, being usually a small casket of lead.

5. **CHURCH VESSELS**, consisting of chalices of gold, silver, bronze, lead, cocoanut, burnt clay; remonstrances, of which there are some splendid specimens; pyxes of metal in which the host was carried to the sick; censers, some of the oldest of them with Runic inscriptions; fonts, mass bells, metal water pots for the altar in the form of lions, knights on horseback etc., vessels for holy water. To these may be added candlesticks, branches, chandeliers.

6. **CLERICAL DECORATIONS**, bishops' and abbots' staves, mitres, crosiers, palls, vestments, copes, surplices, slippers, gloves, signet-rings etc.

7. **OTHER OBJECTS**, such as missals, indulgences etc. Chests for keeping the proceeds of indulgences, rosaries. As a sort of supplement we may here mention seals, calendars, primstaves etc.

## B. WEAPONS AND ARMOUR OF THE MEDIEVAL CHRISTIAN PERIOD, PRINCIPALLY CONNECTED WITH CHIVALRY.

### OFFENSIVE WEAPONS.

1. **SWORDS**, consisting of dress and battle swords, with ordinary swords, rapiers, daggers and sabres. 2. **Daggers** and poniards of various sorts; on these as well as on the swords the outer casing of the hilt is commonly lost, as on the specimen here annexed.



3. **SPEARS**, lances, javelins, partizans, or halberds, which were a sort of lengthened ax in the shape of a spear. 4. **BATTLEAXES**, morning stars, battle flails, hammers and maces. 5. **Bows**, long bows, crossbows and arbalists which were a sort of improved crossbow; to these may be added spanners and jacks, arrows of various sorts and arrow heads.

**DEFENSIVE WEAPONS.**

6. **SHIELDS**, long shields or bucklers, pointed shields and targets. 7. **HELMETS**, casques, morions. 8. **COATS OF MAIL**, of chain and plate, gorgets. 9. **ARMOUR** in all its parts. 10. **ARTICLES CONNECTED WITH HORSEMANSHIP**, such as: saddles, stirrups, spurs, bits, horseshoes, horse mail, objects that were used in tournaments.

**C. ORNAMENTS.**

**CROWNS** and other badges of dignity, **ARMLETS** and **RINGS**, **BEADS**, **NECKLACES** with ornaments suspended from them; also belts, buckles, **BRIDAL CROWNS**, with other bridal ornaments, splendid articles of wearing apparel.

**D. IMPLEMENTS AND HOUSEHOLD UTENSILS.**

Divers sorts of **AGRICULTURAL** and **MECHANICAL IMPLEMENTS**, **DRINKING VESSELS**, consisting of horns, tankards, cans, beakers, cups, rummers and other glasses; **TABLE FURNITURE**, such as dishes, knives, forks, spoons; **HANDMILLS**; various articles of **HOUSEHOLD** furniture.

**E. SAMPLES OF MATERIALS USED IN BUILDING,**

and objects connected with architecture, for instance, **BRICKS** and **TILES**, various mortars; **ARCHITECTURAL ORNAMENTS**, as capitals of columns, foliage and other decorations hewn in stone, formed of burnt clay, or carved in wood; **ENCAUSTIC PAINTINGS ON GLASS**, samples of smith's, turner's, joiner's, plumber's, glazier's and other work which had belonged to buildings; **LOCKS** and **KEYS**, **TAPESTRY**, and other hangings for walls; fireplaces etc.

**F. DIVERS OBJECTS,**

such as **MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS**, trumpets, flutes, hurdy-gurdies, harps, lutes, viols, kettledrums, drums; — dice and draught men; chess men, which have been found wrought of the teeth of the walrus. Till some nearly complete sets of chess men were discovered a few years ago, the individual pieces were often mistaken for something wholly different. As specimens



of these ancient chess men,  
we subjoin first a king, who



is represented in a sitting posture, and a bishop.

Next follows a figure meant no doubt to represent the queen, that piece which has been substituted for the vizir in the original eastern game. The ornaments show that it is referable to the same period as the others, but this specimen was found separate and does not belong to the same set as the two preceding ones, or as the following specimen of a knight. The head of the last mentioned piece is co-



vered with a helmet of the sort that was worn about the time of Canute the great, being pointed at top with pieces at the sides to protect the ears, and one at the back, and having a prolongation down over the nose, which was called the nose screen (*Naseskjerm*). For pawns they often made use, in the ordinary sets of chess men, of the ends of walrus teeth, which were merely sawn off in such a way as to enable them to stand. Here we may also notice **PLAYING CARDS**, an invention, however, of rather recent date.




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## SUPPLEMENTARY SECTIONS.

### A. CURIOSITIES OF A DATE MORE RECENT THAN THE MIDDLE AGES,

such as old clocks and watches, garments, ornaments and household furniture, which, though not themselves ancient, are fashioned after the ancient model; firearms and objects connected therewith; articles which have derived an interest from having belonged to, or been used by individuals of note.

**B. OBJECTS FROM FOREIGN COUNTRIES NOT BELONGING  
TO SCANDINAVIA,**

which serve to elucidate Northern antiquities, for instance: Articles of stone from the South Sea Islands and from the savages of North America, which show how such articles, being very similar to those found here in the North, are still fastened in wood and used as weapons and implements; ancient objects of stone and bone from the Esquimaux of Greenland, showing how harpoons and other implements could be fabricated without metal; other articles, again, important for the purpose of elucidation and of comparison with the Northern antiquities, some of them being ancient ones from Hungary, Italy and Greece; others of a later date from Barbary, Guinea and India; sepulchral urns, with other antiquities from the North of Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, and Russia, indicating how far such articles among the neighbouring nations correspond to those of the ancient Northmen.

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**BUILDINGS.**

It is a well known fact that the remains of ancient buildings are proportionally of less frequent occurrence in the North than in the neighbouring countries of the South. For this the reasons are many, but chiefly, that the structures of the earliest ages were with few exceptions formed of wood. As late as the 13<sup>th</sup> century there were to be found in Denmark wooden churches, which were however gradually exchanged for those of stone. In Norway and Sweden, as also in Iceland, numerous specimens are still to be found of wooden structures which might serve to convey a notion of the ancient method of building.

The most ancient buildings we have, if they may be so termed, are the SEPULCHRAL CHAMBERS, with perhaps a few ruins of fortifications of ancient date. In what manner our ancestors

at so remote a period, contrived without the aid afforded by mechanics to move the stones frequently of a very large size which are used in their sepulchral structures, it is difficult to conceive; on the other hand we may still see the expedient to which they resorted in order to prevent the lateral stones from being displaced by the superincumbent weight. These large sepulchres of stone, which belong to a remote antiquity, furnish no evidence that the builders understood the art of hewing stones. On the other hand there seem to be several indications of their having known how to split them, so as thereby to procure plane surfaces, a practise which however was not resorted to except when absolutely necessary. The expedient employed to prevent the displacement of the stones in sepulchral chambers was to fill up all the interstices with chips of stone of various dimensions. Nothing has as yet been observed approaching to the form of an arch in the stone sepulchres of the North. Their arrangement is of the most primitive and simple kind, consisting merely of upright side walls connected together and covered by large stones laid across them. In Ireland, as also in Sardinia, several specimens have been found of the earliest transition to the arch, the ceilings of the sepulchres consisting of large flat stones laid one over the other, so that the upper stone always projects a little beyond the one which lies beneath it, the stones proceeding from the two sides and meeting in the middle, or else united by an impost. This method of building of which the annexed cut



will convey a more distinct notion, has not of course the advantage afforded by the arch, and is to be regarded as the earlier and more imperfect. That wooden structures were at a subsequent period erected in graves, has already been noticed.

It is not an easy matter to determine to which period the ruins of FORTIFICATIONS and entrenchments are to be referred. The few which remain of ancient date are very remarkable, as

they seem to have encompassed a sort of FORTIFIED CAMP or assemblage of wooden edifices of which not the slightest vestige is left remaining. Wherever agriculture is making progress, the owners of the soil of course endeavour gradually to level the ruins of fortifications, and it is only when such ruins are viewed from a spot somewhat more elevated that the plan will be made obvious to the attentive observer. Those of the most ancient period merit particular attention. At the foundation of the earliest fortifications, no remains are found of walls built of bricks and mortar, but what we generally meet with are large stones placed together. When we chance to meet with any thing of this sort we must carefully endeavour to ascertain whether it be not the internal filling up of a wall, which has been suffered to remain by those who broke down the external casing and carried away the bricks for use, for according to the practice generally followed, it was only this external casing that was regularly constructed of bricks, the inner space being filled with stones and mortar. Of a different construction are the BARONIAL CASTLES and other fortresses of the middle ages, which were usually placed in communication with lakes, on islands, tongues of land, and other similar localities whereof advantage was taken as a means of defence; they are rather small in circumference. The flanks, which since the invention of gunpowder, have been found advantageous, were in ancient times of minor importance; but they endeavoured on the other hand to render the approaches difficult of access and to have some place to retire to when they were forced to abandon the castle itself. In the intrenchments and other fortifications of *more recent times* we have occasionally a traditional account of their construction, and a practised eye will easily perceive that they are constructed conformably to the rules of modern art with a view to be mounted with cannon.

The buildings of which the date can be fixed with any degree of precision do not go beyond the introduction of christianity into the North, although parts of those which are the most

ancient reach very nearly up to that period. We shall take no notice of the ruins which are supposed to have belonged originally to the temple of Upsala, or of those parts of Hadeby church said to be coeval with the time of Ansgarius, but restrict ourselves to those monuments of which we possess authentic accounts. Among the number of these we may reckon the cathedral of Ripen, and the more ancient parts of the cathedral church of Lund, which is known to have been consecrated in the year 1123, but which no doubt was a long time a building. The style of the earlier stone structures of the North is the so called **ANTE-GOTHIC** with round arches, the entire style springing out of and reminding one of the vitiated Roman style of architecture, and the ornaments reminding us of the same style, or of a taste, which in the latter period of heathenism was also common in the North and several other countries, when every thing was ornamented with the figures of serpents and dragons, forming a phantastical sort of arabesques. All buildings and monuments with ornaments of this description merit our particular attention and close investigation.

In the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries the more ancient taste was superseded by another; this was the so called **GOTHIC**, which continued in the North till about the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The arches gained in height and became pointed instead of round. The decorations underwent a change of character, consisting chiefly of foliage and pointed ornaments. Traces are distinctly visible of the influence which the turn taken by architecture in Germany, France and England, exerted on the North. It may however in general be presumed that some time must have elapsed before the effects of the change became very obvious with us. Most of the splendid and stately piles still standing from the olden time, date from this period, such as some of our cathedrals. Several of the ancient manor houses and monasteries were also then built, but they have been in most instances so changed by remodellings and additions that it is difficult now to discover what is original. This

branch of antiquarian science has not as yet been much cultivated with us, but merits attention as likely to furnish important contributions to the history of civilization and the arts. It is desirable that the remains which we still possess (the number of which is not considerable) of the earlier and of the better specimens of later structures, should be carefully preserved, and when repairs are necessary, that care should be taken to restore every thing to its original state, making no additions in a style differing from that which is indicated by the building and ornaments. When the demolition of an ancient structure cannot be avoided, or when ruins are to be explored, it is desirable that accurate drawings by a skilful hand be first made of that which is to be pulled down, and that we should endeavour to obtain a clear notion of the entire arrangement and plan, striving to separate additions of a later date from the original structure. Further we must pay attention to the nature of the foundation, the materials of which the building is composed, as also the mode in which they are joined together, and lastly the ornaments.

As relics of ancient churches, perhaps even of the first wooden churches, we may regard a sort of BAPTISMAL FONTS to plunge the infant in, of large dimensions hewn out of granite, especially when they are furnished with a pediment fashioned of the tortuous or interlaced figures of serpents or dragons. In very ancient churches the armamentary or porch is usually an addition of a later date; it is accordingly in the latter, or over the ceiling thereof that we must look for the STONES WITH CARVED FIGURES OR INSCRIPTIONS, which are sometimes placed above the original door of the church. GRAVE STONES of a very ancient date are usually of a very long and rather narrow quadrangular shape; the ornaments on them are simple, being most frequently a longish cross, or figures in the shape of leaves and lilies; the inscriptions engraved on them merit especial attention. The ALTARS OF BRICKWORK, too, belong usually to the most ancient articles in churches, especially when there is found immured above

them a small flat stone of a remarkable appearance, generally green, beneath which is in most cases found deposited a small leaden casket of relics. It is more rare to meet in these with any accounts respecting the consecration of the altar or erection of the church. As the process of oxydation has often commenced in the lead, and as the characters on the parchment are easiest read directly on being taken up, explorations instituted for such objects ought not to be undertaken before permission has been obtained and only in the presence of competent persons. At the front part of the altar we find the **ANTEMENSALE**, sometimes of brass, sometimes of wood and ornamented with paintings. This remarkable ornament, which is often found in a state of good preservation, is now always hid by the altar cloths and must be sought for beneath them. The **ALTAR TABLETS** are of very different sorts; the most ancient are usually made of thin brass plate; later specimens are met with of sculptured work in wood, most frequently painted and gilt, and to which there are usually folding doors, sometimes several, which are painted; other specimens are wrought of alabaster. They merit different degrees of attention according as they are remarkable for delineations of an uncommon character, or for the value which they may possess as works of art. Every specimen of painting or sculptured work, of a date anterior to the reformation, should be examined by some person conversant with such matters, and be sedulously guarded against humidity, and still more so against all attempts at brushing up, restoration, or removal without permission being previously obtained. With regard to the **PAVEMENTS OF CHURCHES**, it must be observed that as the pews were placed in them at a subsequent period, it is not an unfrequent occurrence to find beneath them ancient and remarkable tombstones, for which reason whenever repairs are undertaken, care should always be taken to ascertain whether or not such be the case. Vestiges of the **ASYLUM**, or sanctuary for fugitives in former times, must be sought for in the chancel, which at this place is paved with stones of a different sort from those



of the floor in general. We often meet in various parts of the church floor with a brick, figured and glazed, of the same size as the rest; these usually indicate the site of walled graves. When after many years' use the churchyard was so much raised that the moisture could easily penetrate into the church, they would sometimes elevate the floor within the church, without in every case removing the stones belonging to the old floor. The WALLS and ceilings of churches were in several places painted with various figures; if these were catholic, and especially if they had any reference to saints, they were in many instances daubed over with whitewash. Such paintings are best detected by the process of a fresh whitewashing, while the wall is still wet. Attempts at bringing them out ought only to be made under the direction of competent persons. INSCRIPTIONS we may expect to find in many places as well inside the church as outside on the walls, or on stones inserted in the latter at the building or remodelling of the church. Sometimes they are formed of a sort of bricks, upon each of which, at their fabrication, was impressed, while in a raw state, one or more letters; they are also found upon tombstones and on bells, as also on baptismal fonts, on those in particular which are cast of bell metal; on which latter and on the bells there are, besides the inscription, sometimes impressions of seals, with occasionally coins set in during the process of casting. Inscriptions are likewise met with on the church presses both inside and outside, as also on the pews, and, not unfrequently, they are engraved on chalices and baptismal vessels.

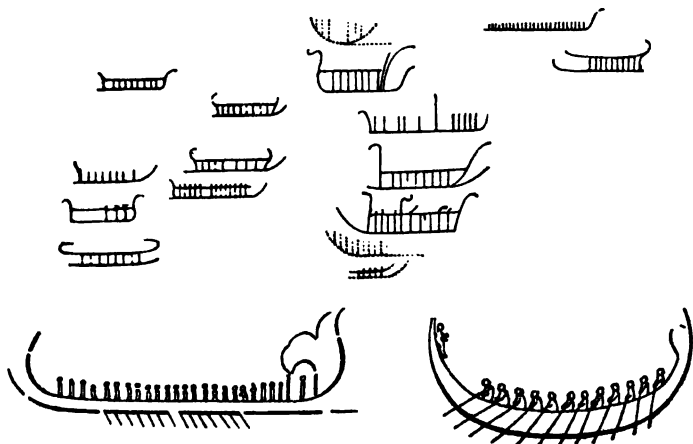
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## WRITING AND INSCRIPTIONS.

It must be obvious to every one how much contemporaneous inscriptions contribute to elucidate the monuments of antiquity and perpetuate the memory of our forefathers. It is therefore

not without good reason that the antiquary has at all times bestowed the greatest attention on remains of this description. Even allowing that such inscriptions do not always address us clearly and precisely, or add to our previous knowledge any new facts of importance, they at least supply us with hints; and as the form of the letters as well as the language itself underwent a gradual change, we are also furnished with a good guide towards ascertaining their age. We will now proceed briefly to point out the order in which the different species of writing succeeded each other in the North, directing our attention to those species chiefly which were employed in inscriptions on monuments, ancient implements etc., while we shall merely take a cursory notice of the most current sort of character used in manuscript writing.

Previous to the introduction of alphabetical characters, most nations have attempted to transmit events to posterity by means of picture writing. In the North not a few traces of this species of writing are still to be found. They occur on rocks, on the inner side of the stones lining sepulchral chambers and on the exterior surface of the imposts placed above. Both the object represented and the composition indicate remote antiquity. One of the most common delineations on rocks are ships; we



also occasionally meet with human figures and with single characters of the sort which have justly been supposed to designate the sun. In Sweden, where such delineations on rocks occur most frequently, they are called HÄLLRISTNINGAR. Those which are found in sepulchral chambers are of very rare occurrence.

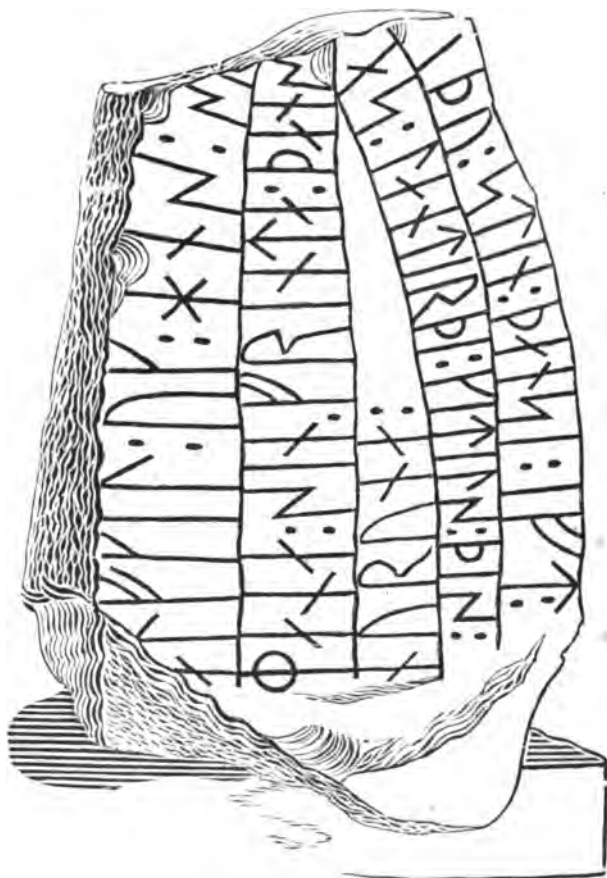
RUNES. There is no doubt that the most ancient species of alphabetic character employed in the North is the BRANCH-OR TWIG-FORMED RUNES. In cutting inscriptions in wood, or in scoring them in the bark of trees, it would naturally be found that straight lines were at once the most simple and most easy of execution, and consequently they would be the first used. If we carry back our researches to a sufficiently remote period, we shall in this respect find a correspondence in many alphabets which doubtless have sprung from the same source, and in this way we shall find that the most ancient Celtiberian, and even the most ancient Grecian and Etruscan letters, bear a certain resemblance to the runes. The runes which we find to have been employed in the North are of different kinds. It is generally admitted that the Runic alphabet, or, as it was called, the *Runerække* or Runic series, consisted at first of only 16 letters, which we will here exhibit in the form which the modifications of a somewhat later period have rendered more common, and in the order which was followed in the olden time:

F U T H D O R K G H N I J E A S T D B P L M R Y

That Runes were already in use in remote epochs of the heathen period, and that in such remote times they had still more the shape of twigs, is an opinion that gains ground; also that even in those times the so called *Binderuner*, or compound Runes, were in use, viz. several letters on one single staff such as, 𐌺 AU, 𐌽 OK, 𐌹 TR, 𐌺 LL, and even still more complex, so that the letters composing an entire word have been formed on a single staff, a mode which was very long retained particularly in Iceland and especially in proper names, as is shown from the character here delineated and dating from

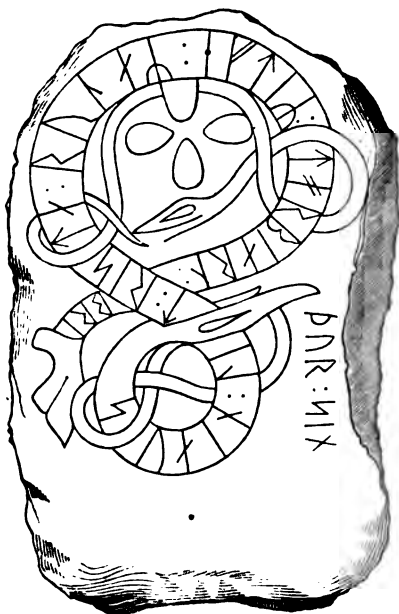


next a larger one written in lines one within the other, and being read, as was generally the case, from left to right:



and which is read as follows: Alfkil: ok: hans: sun: rispu: sten: pansi: eft: Mana: sin: frenta: pans: vas: landirpi: Ketils: þes: nuruna: i. e. „Alfkil and his son erected this stone in memory of Mane his kinsman, who was steward of Ketil the Norwegian”. Not unfrequently the Runes were cut in serpentine windings, of which we also give a specimen here,

which is read: Svain let rista runar eftir Torbjarn brupur sin,



i. e. Svein caused Runes to be cut in memory of Thorbiörn, his brother. In copying Runic inscriptions great accuracy is required, for a point, a small, scarcely perceptible line changes the value of the letter, or occasionally adds a letter, which may easily escape notice. One of the best helps in copying Runic inscriptions, and indeed all sorts of inscriptions, is a knowledge of the language in which they are written, and without such a knowledge all attempts at an explanation will either be

defective, or entirely abortive. Runes are very seldom found employed in writings on parchment. The most ancient mode was to score or cut them, as indeed is often mentioned in the inscriptions themselves. This was generally done in wood, particularly beech wood, which when the length of the inscription required it, was cut into thin slips which were bound together. It is owing to the perishable nature of this material that we can only guess from the later specimens what the more ancient ones must have been. We find mention made of Runes being cut in shields. Another mode of writing, which, strictly speaking, was borrowed from the Romans, was by tracing characters with a pin in wax spread over both sides of a wooden tablet which was cased in a frame. No such tablets have however been preserved, and it is a matter of doubt whether they were known here in remote antiquity, although an instrument

resembling a Roman stylus, which was found in one of the pagan grave mounds, would seem to indicate that they really had been known. That they were used in the North during the middle ages, is proved by a few of them having been preserved. Of the Runic characters, which were long retained among the peasantry, particularly in certain districts of Sweden and Norway, traces are still discernible in the *Bomærker* (literally housemarks) which were employed instead of signatures, or as marks to identify the property of individuals. Another employment of Runes, which long remained in use, was for the tracing of calendars on wood, bone, or parchment.

**ANGLO-SAXON LETTERS.** When the Northmen came to England in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries, and Christianity gradually diffused itself over the North, the mode of writing practised in other countries became known and gradually superseded the Runes. The Anglo-Saxon alphabet, which is a corrupted Roman one, came over to the North along with the ancient monkish characters. As a specimen of its capital letters we subjoin a few words:

**ELFPIG ON DEORABY — LIWITAS.**

It is chiefly in V (P, *V*) and in the pierced Ð or Th, that it differs from the corrupted Latin alphabet used in other countries, wherein moreover the letters had a more rounded form than those of the Anglo-Saxon lapidary characters. The Anglo-Saxon running hand, which was used in manuscripts and afterwards in printed books, contains the same letters but somewhat different in form.

**THE MORE ANCIENT MONKISH CHARACTERS** were a corruption of the Roman capital letters to which they bore a great resemblance. In fact the earliest monkish characters were almost exclusively Roman capitals. By degrees the letters became more rounded and assumed a somewhat different form. As a specimen of the rounded form we give E, G, T, M. It is remarkable enough that in the same inscription we find both the rounded letters and the more ancient angular ones used at random by the side of each other. By degrees the characters underwent a

change, chiefly by additions made to the individual letters. We give the gradually altered form of E viz: E, E, E, E, E. The closed letters are the most recent. To give a clear notion of the more ancient monkish capital writing with its abbreviations we subjoin as a specimen the following portion of an inscription from the year 1128:

HELGI·?SIL·A·I·N·I·C·L·A·I·R·Q·O·L·T·P·L·E·S·E  
L·E·C·O·S·I·A·S·H·V·I·C·E·C·G·E·E·?·T·V·L·T·

This is to be read: Helgi, consiliarius Nicolai regis, qui multiplices eleemosinas huic ecclesie contulit.

**THE LATER MONKISH CHARACTERS.** By means of manuscript writing, which always deviates from the larger lapidary characters, there was introduced a set of characters differing widely in appearance from the former, the „minuscules” as they were called, which bear a great resemblance to the character still employed by us in printed books under the denomination of Gothic. In the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries the practice was introduced of employing letters of this sort also in inscriptions. It is often very difficult for the unpractised to read such inscriptions. To facilitate the reading of them we shall here point out a few abbreviations and signs, some of which are also occasionally used in the older monkish writing. Instead of the termination *us* we find *9* employed. In place of using *m* and *n* it was often customary merely to draw a line over the top of the preceding letter. Numerals were expressed by letters of the alphabet employed in the same way as in the Roman method of notation viz. *m̄d̄r̄s*. The name of Christ was generally written agreeably to the modern Greek abbreviated mode viz. *JHS XPS*. At the same time that the minuscules were almost exclusively employed, there was also in occasional use a sort of majuscules, which formed a still greater deviation from the old monkish characters, and which were chiefly employed to begin inscriptions with. They are the so called Initial letters of the manuscripts, and were ornamented in



a great variety of ways. As a specimen of the minuscule writing we subjoin:



i. e. „Anno domini MCCCCLXXXII, IX maji, obiit Reverendus in Christo pater et dominus Jens Yverson Episcopus Aarhusiensis; orate deum pro eo!”

The greater part of the inscriptions in the monkish character, are in the Latin tongue. The monkish characters remained in use until the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century when the general introduction of printing gradually superseded the more ancient characters, and by facilitating the acquisition of books, contributed to diffuse a taste for the more modern characters, which had besides the merit of being more legible from the absence of contractions or abbreviations. During the middle ages, written books were dear and scarce, which was occasioned not only by the irksome labour of copying them, but also by the costly materials of which they were composed, which greatly enhanced their price; for it was not till the 14<sup>th</sup> century that paper came into general use, but was even then rarely employed in the North where instead of it they made use of parchment. Another cause of the high price of books was the expensive manner in which they were got up, especially ecclesiastical books, which were decorated with gilding, miniature paintings, illuminated letters, ornamented margins, splendid bindings of bone, silver and the like. Even the less splendidly got up books were at all times dear, of which we have proofs in abundance. Here we need only mention that occasionally in Iceland the transfer of a single book from one individual to another was effected by a formal legal deed of conveyance the same as in the case of houses or ships.

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## COINS,

WITH EXCLUSIVE REFERENCE TO THOSE FOUND IN THE NORTH.

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It is a well known fact that in remote antiquity commercial transactions were chiefly carried on by barter, and that it was only when the exchange could not be effected by means of other commodities that recourse was had to metals, which in those days were not possessed in a coined state but in the shape of ornaments and other matters. The high value of the metals in the olden time was the cause that generally speaking there was no occasion for making use of the whole of a trinket, it was therefore customary, in most cases, to cut off a piece. It was on this account that the spiral rings were so highly esteemed; for even after numerous fragments had been severed from them, they still remained fit for their original use. It is likewise well known, that for the purpose of making payments it was customary to use links of gold and silver chains. At the same period it was often customary to have silver and gold in the shape of ingots; which were hammered out both to admit of portions being more easily hewn off, and also the better to ascertain by means of bending whether they possessed that degree of pliability which afforded a test that the precious metals were without any disproportionate mixture of alloy. But what was still more common was the so called ring gold, or ring silver, or the cut fragments of the multifarious sorts of rings which were used in the North. In addition to these we may also mention the coins of foreign countries, but these seem to have been used principally as bullion, or by weight, until the practice of coining money was introduced into the North about 1000 years after the birth of Christ.

Coins belong to the most interesting and important antiquities that have been transmitted to us from remote ages. What especially distinguishes them is that, generally speaking, they admit of being fixed and referred to a precise time with much greater accuracy and certainty than any other antiquarian

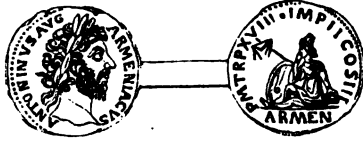
objects. When they are found in connexion with such, or attached to trinkets or ornaments of remote antiquity, they become of essential use in fixing the epoch of such articles. A great variety of ancient coins have been found in the North, occasionally in sand ridges along the coast, whither we may suppose them to have been conveyed by shipwrecks; at other times in cutting turf or in ploughing fields, in excavating graves in churchyards, under the pews of churches, or in the foundations of ruined buildings. They have occasionally been found loose, at other times deposited in vessels of wood, clay or metal, seldom in single pieces, but most commonly in considerable quantities together. Experience has proved that at certain epochs in the North foreign coins were extensively used, and that we may find in close juxtaposition the coins of countries the most different, nay, the most widely separated from each other. On the other hand, on a careful examination of the various discoveries of coins, we shall find that the difference in point of age between the several coins of a quantity found at any one spot, is seldom very considerable, being generally less than 100 years. A careful attention to what coins are found together may be the means of correcting many of the errors which are still to be found in the works of even the latest writers on the coins of the middle ages. In giving an account of the several sorts of coins which have been found in the North, the arrangement we propose to adopt in this treatise, although not the most scientific, is, we believe, the one best adapted for more easily imparting to those who are not conversant with antiquarian matters of this sort, a general view of the subject. We divide them simply, according to the metal of which they are composed, into *Gold coins*, *Silver coins* and *Copper coins*, and shall treat of each of these classes in chronological order under a separate head.

THE GOLD COINS which have been found in the North consist chiefly of the following sorts: 1) The GOLD SOLIDI of the earlier but particularly of the later Roman and subsequent

Byzantine emperors, or Bezants, as they are likewise called, particularly from the 5<sup>th</sup> century after Christ, also imitations of both these sorts by Barbarian princes. The weight of the latter is about that of  $1\frac{1}{4}$  Dutch ducat. It is but seldom that gold coins of a greater weight are found, in which case they were doubtless used rather as ornaments than as coins, for by far the greatest number of them are furnished with an eye, and were found in connexion with beads and with gold bracteates, that is to say, thin gold pieces stamped on one side only, all of them being furnished with an eye (excepting one particular sort which are very small, thin and of an oblong shape) and all of them belonging to the amulets or ornaments of the pagan period under which head they have been already noticed. 2) Rhenish or other GOLD FLORINS, or GUILDERS, also English ROSENABLES. Between these two sorts of coins and the ones above mentioned, there is a long interval, during which, if we except a few coins of the later Byzantine emperors and of some of the califs, it does not appear that gold coins were at all used in the North. The Rhenish gold guilders, which were coined from the gold dust that was washed out of the sand of the Rhine, are of a palish hue, the gold containing a small admixture of silver. They weigh rather less than a Dutch ducat and are furnished with an inscription in monkish characters. The rosenables are large but rather thin gold coins with the smallest proportion of alloy. On the one side is represented a king standing in a ship in the middle of which is a large rose.

SILVER COINS. 1) The most ancient of all the coins found in the North, are the Roman SILVER DENARI, some few of them being from the times of the consuls (but not of the earlier consuls). A few of them likewise are of the earlier emperors; the greater part however are from Antoninus to Septimius Severus (A. D. 138 to 211), during which period there seems to have subsisted between the Roman empire and the North a more frequent intercourse than at any subsequent or previous time. Their size will be seen from the annexed delineation of a single

specimen taken from one of the many varieties which we possess of them. They are thicker than our present coins of the same



size, and their edges are not regular like ours; they weigh about the 8<sup>th</sup> part of an ounce or rather less. Down to the time of the emperor Commodus they are of fine silver; in those of a later date the silver is mixed. 2) Another and important species of coins which are frequently found in the North, are the so called CUFIC COINS, that is to say, coins with inscriptions in the ancient Arabic

character which was first used in the city of Cufa. To show their appearance we annex a delineation of one. They were coined partly by



the powerful Califs of Bagdad, and partly by various princes who were subject to their supremacy. Of course most of those found in the North are the coins of princes in the neighbourhood of the Caspian Sea; there are however many from Bagdad itself, Samarcand etc.; on the other hand but few have been found from Spain, Mauritania, or Sicily. As these coins have no effigies, which were forbidden the Mahommedans, but only inscriptions, they greatly resemble each other. They have this remarkable peculiarity that they all show the date from the Hegira at which they were struck. The oldest specimen hitherto known with the date of coinage has been found in the North, and was coined as early as the year 79 after the Hegira which corresponds to A. D. 698; the latest that have been found here correspond to A. D. 1010; from which may be seen that this sort of coins which were current in the countries through which the Northmen had to pass on their way to Constantinople at the close of the pagan and commencement of

the Christian period, were well known in the North. Both here and in Russia such coins have been frequently found, and in large quantities, in connexion with the broken fragments of silver rings; and we have been informed that on one occasion during the reign of king Frederic IV no less than half a bushel full was found when cutting turf in a bog at Bornholm.

3) Next in the order of time we must mention the PENNING, the only coin which in very remote times was struck in the North and in the neighbouring countries. The first Northern ones with which we are acquainted, are those of Svein tiuguskegg, Olaf skötkonung, and Hakon Athelstansfoster, which are somewhat heavier than the subsequent ones. Those which occur most frequently are of the coinage of king Ethelred in England. The cause of this may be traced to the large tribute which during the reign of that monarch England was obliged to pay to Denmark under the name of Danegeld. In addition to those of English coinage, we find them also of German, Dutch, Bohemian, nay even of Hungarian coinage. Such a penny weighs about  $\frac{1}{32}$  of an ounce and is of fine silver. They have figures and legends in the Anglo-Saxon and oldest monkish characters, and occasionally in Runes. When a smaller piece of money was required, it was occasionally procured by cutting the coin into two or more portions, wherefore half pennies and smaller fractions are often found. As a convenient check against being defrauded, many of these coins had on one side of them a cross which divided the piece into four compartments, and thereby served as a guide in cutting it.

4) During the troubles which arose in Denmark after the death of Svein Estrithson, and which were of long duration, it was found necessary to debase the coin, which was done gradually and in different ways; first by diminishing the weight and afterwards by lowering the standard. About the time of Svein Grathe and the immediate successors of Sverre and of John I in Sweden, the practice of diminishing and attenuating coins of fine silver was carried to the greatest extent. About that time also the practice was introduced into

Denmark of stamping silver bracteates and using them as coins. In the North these were not of a large size, like those of Germany, but small and in general very thin. Sometimes such coins are the so-called half bracteates, viz. such as were intended to be stamped on both sides, but which on account of their tenuity were only fit to receive the impression on one side, which alone shows the perfect impression, the other exhibiting only portions of what was designed to be impressed. Those of inferior silver, which afterwards came into use, were made thicker, and after having lain some time in the ground they often acquire a black colour. None of the coins which were struck in the North, or which were current here from the 11<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> century, were of larger dimensions or greater weight than those above-mentioned, while many of them were of so small a size that it is difficult to conceive how they could have been used by the common people. 5) When in consequence of the intestine troubles and the increasing influence and power of the Hanseatic towns, the coinage came to be more and more debased, it became customary at a period somewhat later to use foreign coins in the North. There were especially four sorts that became common and which are also mentioned in contracts, bills of sale, etc. along with gold gilders. The first sort was the so-called tournoser or tournoyer, properly denominated GROS TOURNOIS, which were first coined in the city of Tours in France during the time of King Philip le bel and of his immediate successors. They are larger than the preceding, being of about the same size as the Cufic coins. A second sort which was common here, were the so-called English STERLINGS, particularly the pennies of Edward the I, II, III (from 1272 to 1377). The coins of the Hanseatic towns naturally constituted a third sort, especially the so-called WITTENPENNINGE, the smaller sorts, and bracteates. A fourth sort, which also found their way into the North, were the Saxon and Bohemian GROSCHENS, which subsequently seem to have superseded the Tournois coins. Frequent discoveries of coins of all these sorts have been made in the North, generally speak-

ing however, of each kind by itself. We know that Sterlings and Wittenpenninge were coined in Denmark, or at least pieces of money intended as equivalent to these. 6). As the last division may be mentioned coins of a still later date, consisting chiefly of the so-called KORSHVIDE, SKILLINGE, KLIPPINGE etc. of which sorts it does not seem necessary to take more particular notice here, and still less of the later sorts which are furnished with legends intelligible to all.

**COPPER COINS.** We have been informed that in the Duchies of Sleswig and Holstein and in Jutland there have, on one or two occasions, been found single Roman copper coins from the times of the Emperors Antoninus Pius and Commodus, but so rarely that we cannot suppose them to have been much in use here. It has indeed been vaguely asserted that a copper coinage existed at a very early period in the North, but we are not aware of any one piece of that metal having hitherto been found, to which on any good grounds a high age can be ascribed. During the later civil wars, especially those which arose in consequence of the imprisonment of Archbishop Jens Gran, and the still more disastrous civil commotions in the time of Christopher 2<sup>d</sup>, the coinage got worse and worse, until at last it became nothing but copper which was to pass for silver. Of these copper coins, which, when first found, are generally green, we have many varieties, for they were struck by bishops, corporate towns, chapters, holders of fees, many of which were acquired by mortgage. They are of the size and thickness of the ancient pennings, and like them weigh about  $\frac{1}{32}$  part of an ounce. They have often been found in quantities of from about 8000 to 9000 pieces together. They belong therefore to the less rare specimens, but ought nevertheless to be preserved and submitted to the examination of competent judges.

It is easy to understand why large coins were not used in the middle ages, when we reflect on the high price which the precious metals then bore. Large coins, from their great value, would have been inconvenient. In ancient times when



the kings, and subsequently the bishops in the North, drew large yearly revenues from the minting of money, that business was often farmed out to mintmasters. As a sort of control, these persons were at first obliged to add their name with that of the place where the coin was struck, a practice borrowed from the English but which was afterwards discontinued. That in ancient times coined silver was of more value than uncoined, and that subsequently people were occasionally forced to accept it in payment for a higher price than its intrinsic value, has been the case in the North just as in other countries.

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## ARMORIAL BEARINGS OR SHIELD DEVICES.

As far back as history reaches we find mention made of distinguished families. The number of such families encreased in proportion as the yeomanry (*bonde*) sank in importance, and by degrees the nobility came to form a powerful class in the state. Afterwards such families assumed permanent names and armorial bearings. It was originally on their shields that they caused certain colours and devices to be painted, but subsequently such shield devices were transferred to many other objects, to show that the owners belonged to, or were descended from some particular noble family. The earlier devices on shields were in general very simple, often two placed obliquely over against each other. When the inscriptions belonging to these make mention of one person only, we may generally assume that it is the arms of that person's father and mother; on the other hand, if a man and woman are mentioned, we may almost always be sure that the one is the husband's and the other the wife's family arms, in which case the husband's is placed on the right hand, that is to say, on the left of the spectator. If the figure of a saint appears holding the shield, it is

frequently that of the particular saint whose name in the calender is affixed to the day on which the individual was born; for in catholic times it was often customary to call the child by the name of such a saint, and we are thus furnished with a means to assist us in discovering the individual in question, viz. we look for a person in that family having the same name as that of the saint. Agreeably to a practice which was general in ancient times, and which even in our days has been retained throughout Iceland and among the common people of the rest of the North, it naturally happens that in many inscriptions we find the son named merely by the prænomen of his father with the addition of the word son, in which cases the coat of arms, or the lauded property if mentioned, must guide us in discovering to what family the individual belonged. The circumstance of being descended from an illustrious family was not only highly prized, but it was also wished to exhibit clear evidence of such a descent. This gave rise to genealogical tables and quarterings. Generally speaking, 16 quarterings were demanded, viz. 8 on the father's side and 8 on that of the mother, or in other words 4 descents. Such tables have been framed in various ways, but naturally in such a manner as to proceed from; or terminate in the individual concerned.

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## GENERAL REMARKS ON THE DISCOVERY AND PRESERVATION OF ANTIQUITIES.

Experience has shown that many specimens of antiquity have been destroyed by the inattention or carelessness of the finder. When excavations and other researches are not conducted with the requisite knowledge and executed according to a well concerted plan, they are just as likely to injure as to enrich antiquarian science. We have therefore thought that a few hints on this subject may not be without their use.

Excavations of sepulchral mounds do not in general correspond to the ideas which the common people entertain of them; for many of such mounds, especially the richest of them, have been previously explored, and many belong to those very remote periods when the metals were not as yet in general use, and consequently contain only articles of stone or burnt clay, all very similar in shape. In case however the formation of roads, or the operations of agriculture should furnish occasion for the exploration of any such mounds, we think it right to solicit attention to the following remarks. The interior construction being, as we have already observed, very various, no general rules for their exploration can be given, but we must in all cases be guided by circumstances. In regard to such mounds as have one or more chambers constructed of large unbewn stones, the entrance is generally through a passage, which, in most cases fronts the East, and must be sought for on a level with, or a little above the surface of the surrounding soil. This passage at its exterior extremity is generally found marked with two rows of stones, which, in proportion as they approach the chamber, become larger, and at the end nearest to the chamber have stone imposts placed over them. By this passage the mound must be entered. In many cases it will be found filled up with mould. In not a few cases such passages have been also found to contain urns and skeletons. At the entrance to the chamber, and sometimes also in the passage itself, it was most commonly the practice to place a door or a shutter, which, if still remaining, must be carefully drawn up or out of the grooves into which it was inserted; however, in cases where it was not made of stone but of wood, it will generally be found to have mouldered away entirely. As the objects contained within, owing to the long lapse of time, are almost always covered, or half concealed by dust, the greatest caution must be exercised so as to be able to notice the relative position of the different articles deposited (the knowledge of which is often of more importance than the articles them-

selves) and to follow up the traces of things that have wholly or in part perished, for example, the wooden shafts of spears, the length of which we may thus be enabled to ascertain. In the case of skeletons we must endeavour to note whether they are male or female, which is best ascertained from the pelvis; and also to note in what manner the articles found along with them were arranged. There is another reason why skeletons merit attention and conservation, and that is that they are supposed, particularly from their size and the conformation of the head, to furnish evidence of different races of men. Not unfrequently the bones of animals have been found in pagan graves. Allowing that they are mouldered, or even charred, still single fragments, especially the teeth when found, may show to what animal they belong, which of itself may be interesting in a scientific point of view. Urns are generally found deposited in the end facing the South. They are often so completely saturated with moisture that the surest way of moving such an urn is to try and set it, along with the earth most closely adhering to it, on a board, and place it in a position where there is a current of air. After the lapse of some hours, the clay acquires consistency again, and then the earth still adhering to it may without difficulty be removed. It is always desirable for us to get the urn along with the bones found in the same with the lid appertaining to it, and when found standing on a small separate stone, to get the stone also on which it so stood. In addition to the proper grave chamber which is generally in the middle and a little elevated above the surrounding earth, urns and other antiquities are often placed in the upper parts of the mound, at the sides, and in the corners.

Under large stones lying by themselves in the fields it has often happened that very rare and valuable antiquities have been found. In blasting, lowering, or removing such stones care should be taken to examine if there be any inscription on that part of the stone which lay undermost; for in this way many of the most important Runic stones have been discovered

After the stone has been removed, the ground on which it stood should be immediately examined with the spade to ascertain if any thing had been deposited beneath it — a slight trouble which may possibly be attended with a rich reward.

In cutting turf in bogs not a few of the most valuable antiquities have been found. In such situations they are generally in a better state of preservation, and along with them have been found more clear and well defined remains of wood and leather, nay even of remarkable bodies and articles of wearing apparel. On such occasions when the turf digger perceives any thing unusual and the work of human hands, he ought to observe the utmost caution, and endeavour to take up every thing that is in immediate connexion with the object. He must not immediately attempt separating the surrounding turfy mass, but ought to pay particular attention to the manner in which the objects are connected one with the other. The earthy particles may either be cautiously washed off with water, or may be dried in the air, after which they may be brushed off. On the other hand care must be taken not to expose the articles to the direct rays of the sun, or to any strong heat, for such parts of them as do not consist of stone or metal are apt to warp or shrink. Even urns have been found in bogs.

In demolishing old buildings there have occasionally been found in the ground on which they stood ornaments of older structure, runic stones, tombstones etc. chiefly employed as foundation stones. If on similar occasions any such objects are met with, they are doubly interesting from the fact that they were already old and cast aside at the time the building in question was erected.

In cleansing water courses and mill dams, in digging ditches, wells and gravel pits, in ploughing, in excavating the foundation of houses, and on many other occasions, antiquities have been discovered. It is however on the occasions first mentioned that such have been most frequently found.

**SILVER AND COPPER COINS** are often found adhering together in masses. When you wish to separate them, this may be effected by steeping them in vinegar; but you must not attempt by breaking them off, or by boiling, to effect their separation.

**GOLD** possesses the property of not contracting rust, but when found has the same appearance as if new. Almost all other substances suffer more or less from the influence of time, or of the locality where they were deposited. **SILVER** has generally a blackish appearance and resembles iron. **COPPER** and **BRONZE** after lying in bogs, generally contract a reddish or blackish rust; but they also very often contract a green rust, which accommodates itself so exactly to the surface as to give the articles the appearance of being enamelled, and make even the minutest ornaments more distinctly discernible. This noble rust, as it is called, ought to be sedulously spared, and should not be injured by shaking the article roughly. **IRON** gets much corroded by the common reddish rust, and it is only in such sepulchral mounds as consist of sand, in graves formed in rocks, and occasionally in bogs, that articles of this metal have been found. **LEAD** becomes oxidized. **AMBER** preserves its appearance when found in water or in damp places; on the other hand it has a dull appearance when found in sand; in the earth it assumes the external appearance of resin, for which it is not unfrequently taken. **GLASS** has generally a dull appearance, and occasionally, as already remarked, it gets covered with a crust which gives it the appearance of mother of pearl. **BONES** are calcinated when found in the earth; they are found in better preservation in sand, and best of all in bogs, where they, however, acquire a brownish hue. **Wood** is found best preserved in bogs. It is seldom met with in sepulchral mounds; on articles found in other places may occasionally be discerned minute remains thereof, which the finder should be cautious not to remove; and in general the finder of objects of antiquity ought to avoid any attempt at cleaning or polishing them, as they may thereby easily be exposed to receive injury.

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## VIEW OF THE PLAN AND UNDERTAKINGS OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF NORTHERN ANTIQUARIES.

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THE object of the Society is, principally, the publication and interpretation of old Icelandic MSS; but it comprehends, besides, whatever else may serve to elucidate the language, history and antiquities of the North in general, whatever may tend to a more extensive diffusion of the interest taken in Northern archæology, and thereby to awaken and cherish a love for forefathers and fatherland.

For the attainment of this end the Society will make it their especial endeavour from time to time to publish critical editions of all such Old-Northern MSS as may be of importance for history, antiquities and language. The Society publishes besides an *ANTIQUARIAN JOURNAL*, in which are given reports of its transactions, extracts from its accounts, and in connexion therewith, lists of the Fellows and Founders; *ANNALS OF NORTHERN ARCHÆOLOGY AND HISTORY*, containing Icelandic, Norwegian, Swedish and Danish treatises, essays and reports serving to elucidate the contents of the ancient manuscripts and Northern antiquity in general. With a view to make the Society and its undertakings better known in foreign countries, it also publishes from time to time a journal containing articles in English, French or German, under the name of *MÉMOIRES DES ANTIQUAIRES DU NORD*.

The Society will also charge itself with the publication of other works, calculated to promote the end it has in view, and when enabled to do so by the compositions of its Members and donations of its benefactors, it will endeavour by other means to diffuse a knowledge of, and awaken an interest in, the ancient North and its literature, taking care, however, never to lose sight of its main object viz. the publication of the Old-Northern MSS.

For the information of those who take an interest in antiquarian researches, we deem this a fit place for giving a view of the most important works whose publication (in conformity with the object above stated, as prescribed by its Statutes) the Society, at the commencement of its career, determined on, and which have been since for the most part completed; as also a preliminary notice of those whose publication has subsequently been resolved on, and are now under preparation, it being our wish that the present pamphlet should serve as a program of the undertakings which the Society has next in contemplation.

The first main undertaking of the Society was the publication of a series, different from Snorre's work, of the historical Sagas concerning

the events occurring without the bounds of Iceland, in the Old-Northern or ancient Icelandic original text, and also in two separate versions, Danish and Latin, bearing the undermentioned titles:

**FÖRNMÄNNAS SÖGUR. 1-12 BINDI.**

**OLDNORDISKE SAGAER. 1-12 BIND.**

**SCRIPTA HISTORICA ISLANDORUM. VOL. I-XII,**  
with contents as follows:

**VOL. I.** First part of the saga of king Olaf Tryggvason preceded by an introduction concerning the early rulers of Norway, Harald fairhair, Erik bloodax, Hakon Athalsteinsfoster, Harald greyfell, and Hakon earl.

**VOL. II.** Second part of the saga of Olaf Tryggvason to the end of the battle of Svolder.

**VOL. III.** Conclusion of the saga of Olaf Tryggvason, with sundry narratives relating to the same period, of king Harald fairhair's skalds, king Sigurd stefa, Thorleif earlaskald, Thorstein oxfeet, Helge Thorerson, Romund halte, Haldor Snorrason, Thorstein bæiarmagn, Thorstein skelk, and Orm Storolfson.

**VOL. IV.** Saga of St. Olaf, part first.

**VOL. V.** Saga of St. Olaf, part second, with sundry additions, partly concerning the supposed miracles of St. Olaf, as also sundry narratives relating to the same period, viz. of Styrbjörn Sveakappe, of Roe, Eymund and king Olaf, Toke Tokason, Endride and Erling, Thoraren Neðulfson, Egil Hallson, and Tove Valgautson, Röðulf and his sons, with Geisli (the ray), a poem on St. Olaf Haraldson by the priest Einar Skulason.

**VOL. VI.** The sagas of king Magnus the good, of Harald hardrade and of his sons, Magnus and Olaf kyrre.

**VOL. VII.** The sagas of the kings Magnus barefoot, Sigurd Jorsalafare, and his brothers Eystein and Olaf, of Harald gille and Magnus the blind, of Inge Haraldson, and his brothers Sigurd and Eystein, of Hakon herdebreid and Magnus Erlingson; together with separate narratives concerning Sigurd slembi-deacon, Einar Skulason, and Gregory Dagson.

**VOL. VIII.** The saga of king Sverrer.

**VOL. IX.** The abridged saga of Hakon Sverrerson, Guttorm Sigurdson and Inge Bardson, the more detailed saga of the same kings from the translation of Peter Clausson, and some recently discovered fragments, together with the saga of king Hakon Hakonson the old, or the crowned, down to the fall of duke Skule.

**VOL. X.** Conclusion of the saga of Hakon Hakonson and a fragment of the saga of Magnus lagabøter; together with narratives partly supplemental, and partly in separate versions, of Halfdan svarte, Harald



fairhair, Hauk hábrók, and Olaf Geirstadaalf, the saga of Olaf Tryggvason by Odd the monk, a brief sketch of the saga of the Norwegian kings, and the series of Norwegian kings in verse according to the chronology of Sæmund fróde.

**VOL. XI.** Jomsvikingasaga, Bishop Bjarne's Jomsvikingadrapa, as also Knytlingasaga, together with fragments of sagas and narratives concerning Denmark, viz. of the introduction of Christianity into Denmark, of Harald bluetooth and Svein splitbeard, of Hakon Harekson as also of bishop Absalon and of a yeoman.

Indexes of the names of persons are to be found in the 3<sup>d</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> volumes. In the original text 6 facsimiles have been annexed of the most important codices employed.

**VOL. XII.** a) A chronological view, viz. The reigns of the Norwegian kings from Harald fairhair to Magnus Lagabæter, and those of the Danish kings from Gorm the old to Erik Christopherson (glipping), after which follows a chronological table for the whole collection of matters contained in the work, from 851 to 1273. b) A geographical index, which in the original text is framed in a compendious form, merely indicating the position of the places mentioned; whereas in the Danish and Latin versions it is drawn up in a more detailed form with the addition of geographical disquisitions. c) An antiquarian register or index rerum. Moreover with especial reference to the original text, d) a prose paraphrase of the various ancient lays or odes interspersed throughout the sagas with explanations annexed. The Latin version contains similar elucidations of each verse as it occurs, followed by a chronological conspectus, genealogical tables, and other critical apparatus. The entire cyclus in 36 volumes is now published complete.

The complete cycle of the mythico-historical and romantic sagas treating of events here in the North anterior to the colonization of Iceland, or prior to the historical age properly so called, was published by the Secretary of the Society, Charles C. Rafn, in the Old-Northern original text along with a separate Danish translation, in the two following works:

**FORNALDAR SÖGUR NORÐRLANDA VOL. I-III.**

**NORDISKE FORTIDS-SAGAER 1-3 BIND.**

**VOL. I.** The Saga of king Rolf krake and his champions, fragments of the ancient Bjarkamál, Völsungasaga, the saga of king Ragnar lod-brok and his sons, Krákumál, narrative of Ragnar's sons, Sögubrot of the battle of Bravalle, the saga of Hedin and Högne, the saga of Hervör and king Heidrek.

**VOL. II.** Of Forniot and his race, the saga of Half and his champions, the saga of Fridthiof hinn frækne, of the Uplendinga kings, the

sagas of Ketil hæng and Grim lodinkinn, the saga of Örvarodd, the saga of An bogsveiger, the saga of Romund Gripson, the saga of Thorstein Vikingson, the saga of Asmund kappabane.

**VOL. III.** The saga of king Gautrek, king Rolf Gautrekson's saga, Herraud's and Bose's saga, Gaungu Rolf's saga, Egil's and Asmund's saga, Sörle sterkes saga, Hialmtér's and Ölver's saga, Halfdan brönnufoster's saga, Sturlaug starfsame's saga, Illuge gridarfoster's saga, Erik víðförlé's saga. The sagas contained in the 3<sup>d</sup> volume of the original text are not given in the translation, but Vol. III of *Nordiske Fortids-Sagaer* contains a Danish version of the saga of Didrik of Bern. There is a facsimile in the original text, and both works are furnished with an historical and mythological index of names, a geographical index, and an antiquarian index rerum.

With these works is connected, as referring to the same period, an edition also prepared by the Secretary of the Society, of

#### **KRÁKUMÁL SIVE EPICIDIUM LODBROCI,**

or ode on the heroic deeds and death of the Danish king Ragnar lodbrok in England, in Old-Danish (or ancient Icelandic), modern Danish, Latin and French, with critical and explanatory notes.

Of the historical sagas, moreover, the Secretary published separately:

#### **FÆREYINGA SAGA ELLER FÆRÖBOERNES HISTORIE,**

or the history of the Inhabitants of the Ferroe islands, in Icelandic or Old-Northern, the Ferroe dialect and Danish, with a facsimile of the Flatey-book, which furnished the groundwork for the editing of this saga, and a map of the islands, in which the Old-Northern names are to be found as they occur in the sagas, the other names being in the Ferroe dialect.

The most important cycle of sagas is that which treats of events occurring in Iceland itself, and of the exploits of the Icelanders at home and abroad, from the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> century, or from the first discovery and colonization of Iceland down to the conclusion of the period throughout which saga writing may, properly speaking, be considered to extend. As these sagas possess in many respects a peculiar interest, the Society regards the publication of them as one of the most important objects for their future labours, and is now having a careful collation made of the very considerable number of MSS, which fortunately have been preserved to our time. The above remark is especially applicable to the oldest and best of these sagas, which rank among the choicest productions of Old-Northern literature, and, by their animated delineations from an early period of human development, are well suited to attract the attention of readers, even among nations the most remote, as being

the only historical records of an heroic age which the annals of the world have transmitted to us. This remote rock, moreover, arrests attention as a steppingstone towards the western hemisphere, until then unknown, or, if we adopt the system of later geographers, as the first land in the new world that was discovered and settled by Europeans. Of this cycle the Society has published:

ÍSLENDINGA SÖGUR. VOL. I-II.

VOL. I, containing two works by the earliest historian of Iceland the priest Are Thorgilsson, surnamed *fróde* or the learned (born 1068, died 1148) viz. the little work entitled *Íslendingabók*, or *Schedæ de Islandia*, and the important historico-geographical work, *Landnámabók*, or *Liber originum Islandiæ*, to which the first named work is to be considered as a prodromus. Here are recorded the first voyages of discovery, which were made partly from Denmark, partly from the Ferroe islands and Norway, also the emigration of the Northmen to Iceland, occasioned especially by Harald fairhair's continual wars with the petty kings of Norway, which ended in the subjugation of all Norway. Iceland was discovered about the middle of the 9<sup>th</sup> century by Gardar, a Dane of Swedish extraction, who lived in Sealand, and the first settlement of the country was commenced in the year 874, by a Norwegian named Ingolf, who established himself at Reykiavik, and it is stated that the country was completely settled in the course of sixty years. In the above mentioned work an account is given of the settlement of Iceland by the colonists (*landnámamenn*), together with their genealogies, and an exact statement of that particular district which each of them took possession of, and which they again partly distributed, in different ways, to their fellow travellers, or inferiors. There is scarcely any country that can produce such a work respecting its first settlement as the *Landnámabók*. The colonies established by the later Europeans in other parts of the world; particularly in America and Australia, and which have since become so powerful and important, may probably undertake similar works, in which case the one just mentioned may in certain respects be recommended as a model.

In this volume supplements have been added from other MSS serving to elucidate partly the Icelandic genealogies of the first centuries after the settlement of the country, partly illustrating the nature of the language and orthography in the 12<sup>th</sup> century when Are *fróde* wrote. As matters of peculiar interest, may be mentioned a list from the year 1143, consequently in the lifetime of Are *fróde*, of a number of Icelandic clergymen of Icelandic extraction then living in Iceland, and Reykholt's *máldagi*, or inventory of the property belonging to Reykholt church with a

deed of conveyance whereby the church and its property are made over to Snorre Sturlason, the celebrated historian, when in 1208, he removed to that place from Borg.

VOL. II, contains the sagas of *Kjalarnesthing* and *Thverarthing*, the events of which occur at the close of the 10<sup>th</sup> and in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, viz. the saga of Hörd Grimkelson and Geir, *Hansa-Thorers* saga, the saga of Rafn the bard and Gunnlaugormstunga, one of the most celebrated of all the Icelandic sagas, a fragment of the saga of Viga Styr and Heidavígar, *Kjalnesingasaga*, or the saga of Bue Andridson; moreover as a supplement, the narrative concerning Jökul Buason, *gridamál* and *trygdamál*, formularies of an agreement and final settlement taken from Grettir's saga, and the two Icelandic codes *Grágás* (grey goose) of 1118 and *Jónsbók* of the year 1281, for the purpose of comparison with the very ancient formularies which have been preserved in the *Heiðarvígasaga*.

In the two volumes published are to be found a map of Iceland about the year 1000, with 10 plates of facsimiles of the most important parchment codices whereon the text of the said volumes is founded; moreover genealogical tables, a register of historical names, and geographical indexes. The task of collating the MSS has been performed by Jon Sigurðsson, keeper of the archives to the Society, the Secretary Charles C. Rafn having afterwards collated the text with the MSS which served as its groundwork. It has been determined, in the publication of the entire collection, to follow the topographical order observed in the *Landnámabók*, so as to begin with Reykiavik, where the earliest settlers from Norway established themselves, continuing on to the West quarter, and then round the country, so that the series is concluded with the sagas of *Arnesthing*, and finally with the *Sturlungasaga*, or *Íslendingasaga* hin mikla, the great history of the Icelanders.

The Society has also caused an abstract to be made in Danish by N. M. Petersen, of the most important historical facts embodied in these sagas, comprising such matters as relate to the history of the Icelandic republic in general, and such as are descriptive of the condition and manners of the people in particular. Of this there has been published:

**HISTORISKE FORTÆLLINGER OM ISLÆNDERNES FÆRD VOL. I-IV**, which, after an introduction treating of the early history of the country, contains the sagas of Egil Skallagrimson, of Gunnlaugormstunga and Rafn the bard, of the Laxdalians, of Kormak, of Nial and his sons, of the Vatnsdalians, of Finboge the strong, of the Eyrbyggjar, of Grettir the strong, of the Svarfdalians.

GREENLAND was the first country of the extensive continent of America that was next discovered and colonized by the Europeans. Its

eastern coast was seen for the first time in the year 877 and the country colonized in 986. In order to do all that lay in their power towards elucidating the early history of this remarkable polar land, the Society determined to publish the original sources of the same, entrusting the execution of this task to Finn Magnussen and Charles C. Rafn, and moreover during the ten years from 1832 to 1841, caused journeys and antiquarian explorations to be undertaken in the firths possessing greatest importance as sites of its ancient colonization. Implements and other requisites were dispatched thither to facilitate the prosecution of journeys, for the purpose of constructing maps, of making excavations in the ruins, of executing drawings of the monuments and inscriptions, and for accomplishing whatever else might tend to a complete elucidation of the olden time of this remote arctic land. The Society has now completed this undertaking and published *Greenland's Historical Monuments*:

#### GRÖNLANDS HISTORISKE MINDESMÆRKER VOL. I-III.

**VOL. I.** contains an introductory examination of the earliest writings on the history of Iceland and Greenland; on the Gunnbjarnarsker or islands lying off the coast of Greenland, which were discovered in the ninth century; Are frøde's account of the discovery of Greenland; detached portions of the *Landnámabók* respecting the colonization of Greenland and the first settlers, the sagas of Erik the red, and Thorfinn karlsefne, extracts from *Eyrbyggjasaga* touching the first settlement of that particular district of Iceland from whence the Greenland colonists proceeded, together with the lives of the earliest settlers in Greenland.

**VOL. II.** An extract of *Floamannasaga* containing the life and adventures of Thorgils Orrabeinsfoster; fragments concerning the first introduction of christianity into Greenland under the auspices of the Norwegian king Olaf Tryggvason, extracts from *Fostbrædrasaga*, concerning Thormod Kolbrunarskald's sojourn in Greenland, an historical poem commemorative of Helge the bard, lawman of Greenland, extract of Gisle Surson's saga concerning Helge Vesteinson, narrative about Thronð from the Uplands, about Audun from Vestfjord, about Lik-Lodin, narrative about Einar Sökkason; extract of the saga of Rafn Sveinbiörnson, of the bishops Gudmund Arason, Paul, and Thorlak the holy's sagas, of king Hakon Hakonson's saga, of *Sturlungasaga*, and of Bishop Arne Thorlakson's saga.

**VOL. III.** Annals relating to the history of Greenland; Greenland diplomas, with others relating to Greenland; geographical notices of the middle ages respecting Greenland and the parts around it, in which are found ancient directions for sailing to Greenland, of the places where

the Greenlanders sojourned in more Northern regions (Norðrsetur), description of Greenland by Ivar Bardson from the middle of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, extract from *Konúngsskuggsjó*, or *Speculum regale*, concerning the position and physical peculiarities of Greenland, Adam of Bremen, Saxo Grammaticus and Ordericus Vitalis on Greenland, extracts from the Icelandic code *Grágás*, with separate provisions for Greenland, extract of Biörn Einarson's Travels from 1385; miscellaneous notices partly of a doubtful or fictitious character, such as the alleged supremacy of the British king Arthur over Greenland in the 6<sup>th</sup> century, and of the geographical relations of Greenland with the neighbouring countries. Travels of the brothers Zeno with an introduction and remarks by J. H. Bredsdorff; of the most important voyages that have been undertaken in recent times from Denmark and Norway in quest of the lost country of Greenland and to explore such portions thereof as have been rediscovered, by C. Pingel. Antiquarian Chorography of Greenland; a conspectus of the monuments of the ancient Northmen discovered in Greenland up to the present time, collected by J. J. A. Worsaae from the accounts given by the different travellers of the investigations undertaken by them at the expense of the Society. The work concludes with a view by Charles C. Rafn of the ancient geography of Greenland founded upon a comparison of the statements in the ancient MSS and the ancient description of the country. Finally there is added a list of bishops and a chronological view by Finn Magnusen, of the early and recent history of the country; an historical register of names, a geographical index with an antiquarian index rerum. Twelve plates are annexed exhibiting maps of the two most important districts of ancient Greenland, Eysribygd, (now the district of Julianahaab) and Vestribygd (chiefly the present district of Godthaab), the numerous ruins discovered in these parts being designated thereon by particular marks. Ground plans and views of the most important ruins of churches and other remains, with delineations of runic stones and other Northern antiquities found in Greenland, likewise of signets of Greenland bishops.

ALEXANDER VON HUMBOLDT, who of all modern travellers has thrown the greatest light on the physical circumstances, first discovery, and earliest history of AMERICA, has admitted that the Scandinavian Northmen were the true original discoverers of the New World; a fact which several later writers of eminence have nevertheless either flatly denied, or called in question. The above mentioned great inquirer has however remarked that the information which the Public as yet possessed of that remarkable epoch in the middle ages was extremely scanty, and he has expressed a wish that the Northern Literati would collect and publish

all the accounts relating to that subject. The Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries considered it a matter of duty to comply with this wish, embracing a threefold purpose: that of illustrating ancient geography and history; that of perpetuating the memory of our forefathers, and lastly that of everlastingly securing to them that honorable station in the history of the World, of Science, of Navigation, and of Commerce, to which they are justly entitled. This has appeared to the Society to be so much the more necessary, since the latest researches have rendered it in a high degree probable, that the knowledge of the previous Scandinavian discovery of America, preserved in Iceland, and communicated to COLUMBUS when he visited that island in 1477, operated as one, and doubtless as one of the most powerful of the causes which inspired the mind of that great man (whose glory cannot in any degree be impaired by the prior achievement) with that admirable zeal, which, bidding defiance to every difficulty, enabled him to effect the new discovery of the New World under circumstances that necessarily led to its immediate, uninterrupted, and constantly increasing colonization and occupation by the energetic and intelligent races of Europe. For this his memory will be imperishable among the nations of the earth. Yet still we Northmen ought not to forget his meritorious predecessors, our own forefathers, who in their way had difficulties to contend with not less formidable, since without knowledge of the properties of the magnet, without aid of compass, charts, or mathematical science properly so called, they dared to navigate the great Ocean, and thus by degrees discovered and partly colonized Iceland in the ninth century, Greenland in the tenth, and subsequently several of the Islands and Coasts of America during the latter part of the tenth and beginning of the eleventh century.

It is the last of these epochs — very remarkable in the history of the world, yet not sufficiently known — that forms the subject of the work here announced. No separate work has hitherto been devoted to this subject, if we except the *Vinlandia* of Torfæus, published in 1705, and here extremely scarce. That work however does not contain any collection of the original statements on which the investigation must be based, and such accounts as it does communicate are but few and incomplete. This collection therefore now makes its appearance for the first time as complete as possible, compiled from the numerous and valuable MSS now extant, and accompanied by a Danish, and also a *complete Latin translation*; and by prefatory remarks, archæological and geographical disquisitions, and other critical apparatus also in Latin. This work the Society published in 1837 „*studio et opera Caroli Christiani Rafn*”, the Secretary, under the following title:

## ANTIQUITATES AMERICANÆ

SIVE SCRIPTORES SEPTENTRIONALES RERUM ANTE-COLUMBIANARUM  
IN AMERICA.

Of the contents of the work we can here merely give a brief sketch, mentioning only the principal sections. Among these may be named, first the historical accounts of Erik the red and the Greenlanders, extracted — and now for the first time accurately published — from the celebrated Codex Flateyensis, particularly concerning **BIARNE HERRULFSON'S** and **LEIF ERICSON'S** first discovery of the American islands and coasts, and the several voyages thither, performed by Leif's brothers and sister. Next the Saga of **THORFINN THORSDSON** surnamed **KARLSÆFNE**, descended from Irish, Scottish, Norwegian, Swedish and Danish ancestors, chiefly taken from two ancient MSS never before edited, and in fact not previously known to the Literati, the one of which is partly a genuine autograph (from 1320-1329) of the celebrated Hauk Erlendson, lawman of Iceland and senator of Norway, well known as a compiler of one of the recensions of the Landnámabók. This very remarkable Saga contains detailed accounts of Thorfinn Karlsefne's and his company's three years' voyages and residence in America, whereby an entirely new light is diffused over this subject hitherto so little known. The only knowledge that Torfæus had of this Saga, which he imagined to be lost, was derived from some corrupted extracts of it contained in the collection of materials for the history of ancient Greenland left by the Iceland farmer Biörn Johnson of Skardsey. It is now for the first time submitted to the literary world in a complete form. The work here announced moreover contains every thing else that the editor has been able to collect and discover relating to that knowledge of the New World which our forefathers obtained from the early discoveries and researches of the Northmen. Among these we may mention, 1. Adam of Bremen's accounts of **VINLAND (Vineland)**, written in the eleventh century, and compiled from authentic accounts furnished to him by Danes, being in fact communicated to him by the Danish king Svein Estrithson, and now for the first time published from the excellent codex in the Imperial Library at Vienna, of which a facsimile has been transmitted to the Society by the Chief of the Library, Count Dietrichstein. 2. Are Frode's account of Vineland, written in the same or in the following century; and also 3, of the eminent Icelandic chief **ARE MARSON**, one of his own ancestors, who in the year 983 was driven to a part of America situate near Vineland, then called **HVÍTRAMANNALAND** or **GREAT IRELAND**, whose inhabitants (of Irish origin) prevented him



from returning, but at the same time treated him with great respect. 4. Other ancient accounts respecting the Icelandic hero **BRÖNN ASHRAND-son**, in his day one of the Iomsburg warriors under **Palnatoke**, and fighting along with them in the battle of **Fyrisval** in Sweden: he also in the year 999 repaired to one of the coasts of America, where he was detained in the same manner, but resided there as chief over the natives for about 30 years. 5. An account of an Icelandic mariner, **GUDLIF GUDLAUGSON**, who was driven to the same coasts in the year 1027, and who was rescued from death or captivity by his above mentioned countryman. 6. Extracts from the *Annals of Iceland* in the middle ages, in so far as they relate to America, particularly **BISHOP ERIC's** voyage to **Vinland** in 1121; the discovery of new countries by the Icelanders in the Western Ocean in 1285; an expedition from Norway and Iceland in the year 1288-90; and also a trading voyage from the ancient colony in Greenland to **MARKLAND** (Nova Scotia) in America in 1347, as recorded by contemporaries. 7. Ancient accounts of the most northern districts of Greenland and America, chiefly visited by the Northmen for the purpose of hunting and fishing; and, among these, a very remarkable account (from a letter of a Greenland clergyman) of **A VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY** undertaken by some clergymen from the bishopric of Gardar in Greenland, in the year 1266, being — as is corroborated by an astronomical observation — **THROUGH LANCASTER SOUND AND BARROW'S STRAIT** to regions which in our days have for the first time been made correctly known through the zealous exertions of Sir William Parry, Sir John Ross, and Capt. James Clark Ross, and other British navigators. 8. Extracts from the ancient geographical works of the Icelanders, to which is added an outline taken in the 13<sup>th</sup> century representing the earth in four inhabited quarters. 9. An ancient Feroish *kvæði* wherein **Vinland** (**Vujnland**) is named, and allusion is made to its connexion with Ireland.

To which are added I. A description accompanied by delineations and occasionally by perspective views of several *Monuments*, chiefly *Inscriptions, from the middle ages*, found partly in **GREENLAND** and partly in the States of **MASSACHUSETTS** and **RHODE-ISLAND** in North America, on the one hand confirming the accounts in the Sagas, and on the other illustrated by them. II. Detailed *Geographical Inquiries*, whereby the sites of the regions and places named in the Sagas are explored, and are pointed out under the names by which they are now commonly known, viz. **HELLULAND** (*Newfoundland*), **MARKLAND** (*Nova Scotia*), and especially **VINLAND** (the States of *Massachusetts* and *Rhode-Island*), and even districts more to the South, probably situate in

*Virginia, North Carolina*, and in *Florida*, which is supposed to be the most southerly land mentioned in the most authentic Saga-accounts, although sundry of the Northern Geographers of the middle ages would seem to intimate their knowledge of the easterly direction taken by the continent of South America. They are chiefly based on the accounts in the ancient MSS, and on the explanations of the *astronomical, nautical* and *geographical statements* contained in the same, which besides receive the most complete confirmation from accounts transmitted by distinguished American scholars, with whom the Society have entered into correspondence, and who, after several journeys undertaken for that object in Massachusetts and Rhode-Island, have communicated accurate illustrations respecting the nature of the countries, their climate, animals, productions, etc., and have furnished the Society with descriptions and also with delineations of the ancient Monuments found there. III. *A Chronological Conspectus*, arranging under their proper dates the several voyages to America and the most important events which occurred in that quarter of the world. IV. *An Index of Persons*, in which the names of those persons (of both sexes) who took part in the American voyages are printed in a different type. V. *A Geographical Index*, in which the same method is followed in regard to names of places mentioned in America. VI. *An Index rerum*, containing among other things the names of the various productions of the American countries. VII. *Genealogical Tables*, showing the lineage of the most eminent of the Northern discoverers of America, continued down to our days, whereby it is demonstrated that many persons now living in Iceland, Norway, and Denmark, as also the celebrated sculptor Thorvaldsen, do actually descend from them, that is from men, who, 800 years ago, were chiefs of the American natives, or who were at that remote period born in America.

The work consists of 584 pages Imper.-Quarto and is accompanied by 18 *engravings*, viz: 8 *Facsimiles*, some of which represent entire pages of the best of the MSS employed on the present occasion, in order to give a clear and complete idea of their nature: by dint of much pains the artist has succeeded in representing them with great accuracy, both as regards the outlines of the letters, which were often much faded away and difficult to discern, and also the colour of the different parchments. Further 4 *Maps*, viz: 1. One of *Ancient Iceland*, being the first ever made, representing its republican division about the year 1000, constructed by the Icelandic geographer Biörn Gunnlaugson with the aid of Finn Magnusen and other Icelandic scholars. 2. *A Map of the district of Julianehaab in Greenland*, probably comprizing the Eystribygd, as

it was called, (also important in a geographical point of view), constructed for the Society by Capt. William A. Graah, R. N. from observations and measurements made by him in the country itself, and from such other authorities as were available. On this map are noted the numerous sites (*rudera*) of churches and houses of the ancient colonists, as far as these are now known. 3. *A General Chart* of the Northern Icy Ocean, and of the *Coasts of the Atlantic* for the purpose of exhibiting a view of the voyages of discovery. Here is delineated the Eastern part of North America, together with such names of countries, capes, firths, islands, and places, from LANCASTER-SOUND to FLORIDA, as were adopted by the ancient Northmen. 4. *A Map of Vinland*, also with the ancient Northern appellations. Finally, *six Engravings* being delineations, and partly prospects of the Greenland and American monuments of the middle ages treated of in the work; several of these are very remarkable, and, for the most part, hitherto quite unknown, such as Inscriptions on rocks in Massachusetts and Rhode-Island, which from the disquisitions contained in the work, would seem to have been partly intended to indicate the *landnám*, or the occupation of the country, effected by the ancient Northmen.

For the convenience of those who prefer reading ENGLISH to Latin there is given in *English* a historical view of the Voyages of Discovery, accompanied by the geographical disquisitions, on which account the maps thereunto referring have also *English names*. Moreover the several communications received from the North-American Members of the Society's Committee on the Ante-Columbian History of America are also inserted in *English*.

The historical fact of the Northmen having in the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries discovered and partially colonized a considerable portion of the coast of America is, since the publication of this work, becoming more and more generally acknowledged both on this and on the other side of the Atlantic. We will here restrict ourselves to quoting some observations made on this work by one of the most competent judges, the distinguished Norwegian scholar Jacob Aall, who availed himself of it in giving an account of these events, in his translation of Snorre Sturlasson's *Norske Kongers Sagaer*, (*Sagas of the kings of Norway*), published at Christiania in 1839:

*Vol. II, page 213.* „We will now attempt to ascertain more precisely the points at which these Northmen touched, and which brought them into connexion with America. In doing which we shall be guided by the author of the *ANTIQUITATES AMERICANÆ*, who, by collecting all the *Saga* accounts thereunto relating, by fixing the places visited, and by

raising conjecture to historical evidence, has successfully closed one of the most interesting investigations that have been accomplished by antiquarian research in our time."

*Page 214.* "In this respect the correspondence between the Secretary of the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries of Copenhagen and the Secretary of the Historical Society of Rhode Island, Providence, N. A., is very interesting. The questions submitted to the American scholars have for their object to ascertain the spot where Leifsbudir were erected, and to learn how far the description given by our forefathers corresponds with the nature of the country in question; and the answers are such as to leave no doubt as to the correctness of the Danish scholar's opinion."

*Page 217.* "The North has accordingly every reason to be grateful to the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries, and particularly to Professor Rafn, who, with such indefatigable perseverance, with so much knowledge of the subject and critical acumen, has elucidated a portion of ancient history hitherto so obscure and at the same time so interesting. It must likewise be highly gratifying to the Northman, when he sees the scholars of America meeting the antiquarians of the North with the most ready zeal, in order to obtain a correct result from these investigations."

"We must also in this respect refer to the great work alluded to, and to the correspondence carried on between its author and American scholars. Every line breathes, on the one hand, an impartial zeal to discover the truth, on the other, a desire to communicate all that can contribute to the elucidation of the subject. Under such fortunate circumstances we need not be surprised that, of late, a strong light has arisen to illuminate this obscure part of our history."

"The author of this will have completely attained his object, if he shall have succeeded in turning the attention of his antiquarian countrymen to this monument of the new world, and to the work which so admirably illustrates this portion of the history of our olden time — a work, of which the perusal has afforded him some of the most agreeable hours that he has ever spent in antiquarian researches." —

In 1837 and the following years sundry lectures were delivered at several places in North America upon the contents of this work. First of all at Boston the Governor of Massachusetts, Edward Everett, subsequently American Minister in London, delivered such a lecture as introductory to the Massachusetts Historical Society's course, in which he reviewed in detail and criticised the contents of the work; in Washington, New York, and other places similar lectures were delivered by

the Rev. A. Davis upon the discovery of America by the Northmen, of which the fourteenth edition with improvements appeared at Troy, N. Y., 1846; likewise by George Folsom Esq.: *Lectures on the voyages to America by the Northmen in the 10<sup>th</sup> and following centuries*, delivered before the New York Historical Society at Stuyvesant Institute and subsequently at Clinton Hall. With a view to pave the way for American scholars to the study of these ancient records in the original language, the Hon. George P. Marsh of Burlington Vt., published in 1838: *A compendious Grammar of the Old-Northern or Icelandic language*, compiled and translated from the grammars of Rask.

The author's historical account of the discovery of America by the Northmen in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, which was inserted in English at the beginning of the work, was reprinted in the *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, London, Vol. VIII p. 115-29; it was also published in *DANISH* in the Society's *Annals of Northern Archaeology* 1840-41, p. 1-51, and in *French* by X. Marmier in *Mémoires des Antiquaires du Nord* 1836-39, p. 27-55, where may also be found the author's Supplement to the *Antiquitates Americanæ*, p. 369-85. The historical account above mentioned has also appeared as a separate work in several languages, translated by various hands; thus in *ENGLISH*: *America discovered in the Tenth Century*, New-York, 1838; in *FRENCH*: *Mémoire sur la découverte de l'Amérique au dixième siècle*, traduit par Xavier Marmier, Paris 1838; in *GERMAN*: *Die Entdeckung Amerikas im zehnten Jahrhundert, aus dem Dänischen von G. Mohnike*, Stralsund 1838; in *DUTCH*: *Narichten betreffende de ontdekking van Amerika in de tiende eeuw*, door Montanus Hettema, Leeuwarden 1838, and likewise translated by D. Buddingh: *Ontdekking van Amerika en herhaalde zeereizen derwaarts in de X. XI. XII. XIII. en XIV. eeuw, te 's Gravenhage* 1838; in *POLISH*: *Wiadomosc o odkryciu Ameryki w dziesiatym wieku, na polskie przetlumaczył J. K. Trojanski*, w Krakowie 1838; in *RUSSIAN*, *Объ открытіи Америки и въскъ, Санктпетербурга* 1838, also inserted in the *Journal of the Imperial Ministry of instruction* for the same year, and thereafter translated into *BOHEMIAN*: *O obgewenj Ameriky w desátém stoletj*; preložil Jos. Wěnc. Podlipsky, conf. *Casopis českého Museum*, w Praze 1839, p. 169-91; in *SPANISH*: *Memoria sobre el descubrimiento de la America en el siglo decimo*, traducida al castellano por un ciudadano de Venezuela (Don Jose Vargas, formerly President of the republic of Venezuela), Caracas 1839; likewise, *Sobre el descubrimiento de America en el siglo X por los Escandinavos*, traducida por Don Pedro Jose Pidal, Madrid 1840; and, translated by Don Joaquin Prieto y Warnes at St. Jago, Chilli: *Descubrimiento de America*

por los hombres del Septentrion, Valparaiso 1842, conf. El Museo de Ambas Americas T. I, p. 107-16, 226-85, 297-303; T. II, 49-56; in **Portuguese**: Memoria sobre o descobrimento da America no seculo decimo; traduzida por Manoel Ferreira Lagos, Rio de Janeiro 1840; conf. Revista Trimensal de Historia e Geographia, ou Jornal do Instituto Historico Geographico Brasileiro, T. II, p. 208-34; in **ITALIAN**: Memoria sulla scoperta dell'America nel seculo decimo tradotta da Jacopo Gråberg da Hemsö, Pisa 1839; in **MAGYAR**: Értkezés Amerika felfödztetéséröl a' tizedik században, francziából Marmier Xavér után fordította Tóth Mihály, kiadta rövid bevezetéssel Kubinyi Ferencz, Pesten 1842. — The Antiquitates Americane have also given rise to several works by other authors, founded on the ancient MSS and investigations therein contained; among these we may enumerate: The Northmen in New England, or America in the Tenth Century, by Joshua Toulmin Smith, Boston 1839, and by the same author: The Discovery of America by the Northmen in the Tenth Century, with Maps and Plates, London 1839. The Discovery of America by the Northmen in the Tenth Century, with notices of the early settlements of the Irish in the Western Hemisphere, by North Ludlow Beamish, London 1841; Fahrten der Normänner nach Amerika schon über 500 Jahre vor Columbus, von Karl Wilhelm, Heidelberg 1842; the same in Swedish: Amerikas upptäckande genom Norrmännerne 500 år före Columbus, öfversatt med Tillägg og Anmärkningar af Wilhelm Malm. Stockholm 1843 m. I kart 2 pl. Antiquidades Americanas. Noticias que tuvieron los Europeos de la América Antes del descubrimiento de Christóbal Colon, recogidas por A. Bachiller y Morales. Habana 1845. Besides the four Spanish versions published at Madrid, Caraccas, Valparaiso and Havanna, a fifth translation into the same language of the author's historical view of the discovery of America in the 10<sup>th</sup> century executed by Don Francisco de Rivero, appeared in 1845 at Lima in the republic of Peru. In 1845, there appeared in Copenhagen as a separate work: **ANTIQUITÉS AMÉRICAINES** d'après les monuments historiques des Islandais et des anciens Scandinaves publiées sous les auspices de la Société Royale des Antiquaires du Nord par C. C. Rafn. Imp. 4<sup>to</sup> with 2 maps, and in 1847 the same author's *Aperçu de l'ancienne géographie des régions arctiques de l'Amérique*, with 3 maps.

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During the first years after its foundation, the Society published a gazette, and subsequently, till the expiration of the year 1842, separate reports of its proceedings. Simultaneously with these it also commenced

the publication of philological, historical, and archæological treatises, and up to the close of 1845 had published five volumes forming the two undermentioned collections which are now terminated:

**TIDSSKRIFT FOR NORDISK OLDKYNDIGHED, VOL. I-II.**

**NORDISK TIDSSKRIFT FOR OLDKYNDIGHED, VOL. I-III.**

Of these works the *first* mentioned contains, besides several shorter articles: An attempt to construct a system of Danish orthography on scientific principles with reference to the original language and that of our neighbours, by R. Rask. The 1<sup>st</sup> of November and the 1<sup>st</sup> of August, two historico-calendary enquiries, with a supplement on fire worship especially in the North, by Finn Magnussen.

Of the articles contained in the *latter* of these two works we shall restrict ourselves to mentioning the following: Of the rise, perfection and decay of historiography in Iceland, by P. E. Müller. Of the ancient Icelandic code Grágás, by J. F. W. Schlegel. Historical essay on the dialect of the Jutland peninsula, by C. Paulsen. On the services rendered by Ole Worm to the study of Northern archæology. by E. C. Werlauff. View of the stone antiquities of the North from the pagan times, by the Society's Archæological Committee, particularly C. J. Thomsen. Remarks on the voyages to the North attributed to the Venetian brothers Zeno, by Christian C. Zahrtmann. On the origin and intercourse of the English with Iceland in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, with especial reference to Columbus's voyage thither in the year 1477, by Finn Magnussen. Remarks on local names in Normandy, by N. M. Petersen. Biographical notices of Arne Magnusson, by Jon Olafson of Grunnavik, with an introduction, remarks and supplement by E. C. Werlauff. Muspilli, or fragments of an ancient High German, alliterative poem on the end of the world, with a translation and remarks by N. M. Petersen. Of ancient monuments in the diocese of Bergen in Norway, by J. Neumann. Comparative inquiry concerning certain specimens of heathen antiquities found at Gristhorpe in Yorkshire and at Biolderup near Haderslev. Moreover, antiquarian reports from Iceland, the Feroes and Greenland, and especially from Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. Besides sundry engravings on brass and wood which are inserted in the text, there are nine large copperplates belonging to this collection, which is furnished with a register, especially of antiquarian contents, and forms a complete work.

In consequence of the increased interest gradually evinced for the exertions of the Society and the impulse thereby imparted, it became possible from the year 1836 to commence a new journal, which is got up in a style better suited to what is at present demanded in a work

of this description. This journal or review is now published pursuant to the Statutes of the Society, and will in future constantly be continued under the following title:

**ANNALER FOR NORDISK OLDKYNDIGHED OG HISTORIE,**

**ANNALS OF NORTHERN ARCHÆOLOGY AND HISTORY,** of the contents of which we beg to direct attention to the following, reference being made to the separate volumes:

**1836-1837 WITH 7 PLATES:** View of the earliest expeditions from the North to Ireland, by N. M. Petersen, with a map of ancient Ireland. On the knowledge possessed by the ancient Northmen of the Pyrenean peninsula, by E. C. Werlauff. Of the position of ancient Greenland, Grenmar and other places mentioned in connexion therewith in the ancient MSS, by P. A. Munch. View of the life of the Norwegian queen Gunnhilde, by N. M. Petersen. An examination of the metallic mass of some antiquities from the age of bronze, by Baron James Berzelius. Antiquarian notices from Greenland, arranged by C. Pingel. Description of two discoveries made at Ringerige in Norway of antiquities from the latest period of heathenism, by Rudolph Keyser. Remarks on the mummylike body of a female found in a bog near Haraldskier in Jutland, which by some is supposed to be the Norwegian queen Gunnhilde, by the Archæological Committee. Expeditions of the Danes to the Vendean country, an historical exposition by N. M. Petersen, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>d</sup> sections. On the Ruthwell obelisk, and on Anglo-Saxon runes, by Finn Magnussen. An account of some less considerable discoveries of remarkable antiquities, by the Archæological Committee.

**1838-1839 WITH 10 PLATES:** Expeditions of the Danes to the Vendean country, by N. M. Petersen, 3<sup>d</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> sections. Descriptions of some antiquities found at Norgaard in the parish of Sparboen, Throndeim, by R. Keyser. On a stone ring with a runic inscription from the heathen period found in Scania, by Finn Magnussen. On the game of chess in the ancient North with reference to a remarkable discovery made in the Hebrides, by the Archæological Committee. On the stone axes of the South American savages, by P. W. Lund. Examination of two stone heaps in the parish of Veiby in Jutland, by J. A. A. Worsaae. On the most ancient place of worship of the Northmen called *ve* or *vi*, by Finn Magnussen. Historical account of the Sealand castles of Hiortholm and Gurre, together with that part of Waldemar Atterdag's legend which relates to his connexion with Tovellille, by Vedel Simonsen. Historico-antiquarian account of the parishes of Snodstrup and Ølstykke in the balliwick of Frederiksborg, by H. Knudsen and K. Möhl. On the



East Danevirke, by Claus Manicus. Hällristningar (engravings on rock) in Bohuslän, by Lennart Åberg.

1840-1841 WITH 10 PLATES: The discovery of America by the Scandinavians in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, from accounts contained in Old-Northern MSS by Charles C. Rafn (illustrated by two maps). Remarks on an ancient structure at Newport in Rhode-Island, the Vinland of the Northmen, by Thomas H. Webb and C. C. Rafn. Remarks on the metre and arrangement of the strophes in *Völuspá*, by N. M. Petersen. The most ancient portions of the church of Vestervig monastery, by N. S. Höyen. Description of Bjernede church at Sorö, by J. B. Sorterup. Of king Gorm's and queen Thyre's mound at Jellinge, by J. J. A. Worsaae. Philology in the North, remarks suggested for maturer consideration by N. M. Petersen. View of the rise of astrology, its development and extension to the North, by Finn Magnusen.

1842-1843 WITH 10 PLATES: Queen Dagmar, by N. M. Petersen to which is added a description of Queen Dagmar's cross and other crosses from the middle ages, by the Archæological Committee. Discovery at Vaalse in Falster, of antiquities from about the year 1000, occidental coins described by C. J. Thomsen, and oriental (Cufic) coins described by Jac. Chr. Lindberg. Description of some discoveries of remarkable antiquities, of Cufic coins, by Jac. Chr. Lindberg, and of other antiquities by R. Keyser, Finn Magnusen, C. J. Thomsen and C. C. Rafn. On the old Danish ballads, by N. M. Petersen. Remarks on the figures cut upon rocks, by Lennart Åberg. Two monuments of antiquity at Odsberred in Sealand, by Finn Magnusen and Charles C. Rafn.

1844-1845 WITH 12 PLATES. The importance of Northern antiquity for the present times, by N. M. Petersen. Boundary line between Norway and Sweden in the latter half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, according to a parchment MS, by E. C. Werlauff. Discoveries made in cairns in Denmark, communicated by J. J. A. Worsaae. View of the emigrations from Normandy to Italy, and of the earliest conquests of the Northmen in Naples and Sicily, by F. Schiern. Remarks on the two earliest German poems, recently discovered by Waitz, published and explained by James Grimm and Finn Magnusen. Of the earliest existence of the Russians in Russia and Byzantium under the names of Goths, Varangians, *Fœderati* and Russians, prior to the foundation of the Russian empire, by F. Kruse; from the Journal of the Russian bureau of instruction, by Leopold Keyper. Remarks on some buckles from the latter period of heathenism. View of urns and other vessels found in the earth from the heathen period of the North, in behalf of the Archæological Committee by J. B. Sorterup.

**1846 WITH 3 PLATES.** Of the importance of a centre for Northern Archaeology, by J. J. A. Worsaae. On the settlement of the North, especially of Norway, chiefly illustrated by an examination of geographical relations, local names, and other topographico-philological data, by P. A. Munch. Fragment of an alliterative Anglo-Saxon homily, in which are named some of the heathen deities of the North, taken from a codex in the British Museum, with a literal Danish translation, by Charles R. Unger. Geographical remarks attached to a portion hitherto unpublished of the younger Edda, by P. A. Munch. An essay on the characteristic features of Northern poetry, by Grimur Thomsen. National antiquity in Germany, itinerary remarks by J. J. A. Worsaae. Remarks on the boundary line between Norway and Sweden in the latter half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century by P. A. Munch, with a map. The Armöddlinga family of Norway, a genealogical inquiry founded on the codex Fagrskinna, by P. A. Munch. Historico-philological inquiry on the appearance of the most ancient general Northern language and an attempt to determine the normal orthography and grammar of the ancient Swedish and Danish tongues with their precise relation to the Norrœna tongue, by P. A. Munch. On the baptismal font in Baarse church in Sealand, its Latino-Gothic inscription and peculiar runic alphabet, by K. T. Wiborg and Finn Magnusen. Remains of antiquity from the stone age discovered at Österbotten in Finland, by Jacob Fellman. The legend of Ásgarðsreiðin, by P. A. Munch. On a costly buckle found at Largs in Scotland, with its two runic inscriptions, accompanied by historical disquisitions by Finn Magnusen. Remarks on Queen Dagmar's cross by Count Joseph de Cigalla of Santorin. Formulas of spells in the Feroe Isles, communicated by C. Plöyen. Popular legends of the Feroe Isles, to which are added remarks on the Feroe pronunciation, by V. U. Hammershaimb.

The six volumes now published are accompanied by 52 plates, besides a number of cuts inserted in the text.

As the organ for communications to its Fellows in foreign countries and the public institutions with which it is connected, the Society has published, since 1836, and pursuant to its Statutes will in future continue to publish, reports of its proceedings, as also, philological, historical and archæological transactions in *English, French or German* under the title of:

#### MÉMOIRES DES ANTIQUAIRES DU NORD.

As these Mémoires are to be met with in all large public libraries in and out of Europe, we deem it unnecessary further to particularize their contents in this place.

In like manner, since 1843, the Society has had a similar organ of communication for its Fellows in the North, containing articles in the Scandinavian languages, viz. Icelandic or Norrœna (Norse),

Swedish and Danish, which, in accordance with the Statutes of the Society, will in future constantly be continued under the title of:

**ANTIQUARISK TIDSSKRIFT (ARCHÆOLOGICAL REVIEW);** the contents of which we now proceed to mention more in detail in noticing the first volume published, which embraces the series of

**1843-1845 WITH 7 PLATES:** Account of two carved chairs brought hither from Iceland, by Finn Magnusen. Remarks on a chair from the middle ages of Norway, by J. C. C. Dahl. On the wooden ornaments of the ancient Norwegian churches, by J. C. C. Dahl. On Old-Northern proper names in a necrological notice written at Reichenau of the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> century, by James Grimm. Discovery in the North of Hungary of antiquities supposed to be Slavonian, by E. A. Zipser. On the ancient monuments of Persia; by N. L. Westergaard. On the bronze works of the early ages of the North, by C. J. Thomsen. Hällristningar in Jemtland, by C. A. Wetterbergh. Of two runic stones hitherto unknown in the North of Jutland, by Finn Magnusen. Proposal for recording and preserving the unpublished popular traditions and songs of the Icelanders, by George Stephens. This journal moreover contains Annual Reports and Bulletins of the Society's proceedings; in accordance with the Statutes there is also inserted therein a statement of the Society's Permanent Fund for the publication of ancient Icelandic MSS and for promoting the study of Northern archæology, with lists of its Founders (*Membres Fondateurs*); lists are also given here from time to time of the Society's ordinary Members and extracts of accounts relative to its financial concerns. Further, there are here inserted at greater length (as more briefly in the *Mémoires des Antiquaires du Nord*) accounts of the Museum for Northern Antiquities, as also of the collections made by the Society, and of other collections either directly connected with, or conducive to the furtherance of the science of antiquity, and which it may be proper here briefly to notice:

**THE MUSEUM FOR NORTHERN ANTIQUITIES** was founded for the purpose of containing collections of particular objects illustrative of the general history of civilization in the North, with the exception of MSS and coins, which are preserved in larger and distinct collections. The specimens are arranged in 12 rooms of the palace of Christiansborg, in chronological order according to the ascertained or conjectured age of the objects, first the articles from the three successive periods of **HEATHEN ANTIQUITY**, viz. the **STONE AGE**, the **BRONZE AGE**, and the **IRON AGE**; then the articles from the **CATHOLIC TIMES** also divided into periods. The Museum is accessible to the public every Thursday from 11 to 1, and in the summer months, from May to September, also on Mondays from 5 to 7 p. m.

Besides the Museum in Copenhagen, there are other Cabinets for Northern Antiquities in BERGEN, CHRISTIANIA, STOCKHOLM, LUND and KIEL.

THE CABINET FOR AMERICAN ANTIQUITIES is connected with the Museum above-mentioned, adjoining to which a place has been assigned it at the palace of Christiansborg. It is open to the public at the same hours as the Museum. Through the investigations which the Society caused to be undertaken during the 10 years from 1832 to 1841 in the most considerable firths in Greenland, which in remote ages were inhabited by the ancient Northmen, and where numerous remains are still to be found of their dwellings, not a few objects were from time to time discovered possessing great value, as affording unmistakable evidence of the colonization of the country by the Scandinavians. These compose THE SCANDINAVIAN SECTION of the Cabinet, to which belong, as being found in explorations of the church-yards, articles of wearing apparel; among these a complete kirtle of the very same texture as the early stuffs from the iron age of the North, small wooden crucifixes found on the breast of corpses, tombstones with crosses, runes and black letter characters, stones used for sinking nets with runes cut upon them, quern stones, and sundry fragments of church bells, which objects must necessarily be derived from the christian colonists that went forth from the Scandinavian North. Of these objects we may mention, as deserving particular notice, three stones with inscriptions, two tombstones, the one with an epitaph in round Roman characters on a certain HROALD KOLGRIMSON, found on the southernmost part of the west coast in Heriulfnes churchyard; the other with runes on VIGDIS, THE DAUGHTER of MAGNUS, found in the churchyard at Brattahlid, the seat of the governor or lawman, and a third with a longer runic inscription from the island of Kingiktorsoak high up in Baffin's bay lat. 72° 55', which informs us that three men, viz. ERLING SIGHVATSON, BJARNE THORBARSON, and ENDRIDE ODDSON had been there on the 25<sup>th</sup> of April 1185, in commemoration of which they had erected a cairn in which the stone in question was found inserted. Besides this section which we particularise as the most important, the Cabinet also contains other articles from the Antecolumbian times of America, many of which, particularly those of stone and bronze, are not devoid of features bearing a remarkable resemblance to those which characterize the antiquities of the North of Europe. AN ESQUIMAUX SECTION, containing specimens the greater part of which are also from Greenland, comprising vessels, implements, harpoon heads, which prove that the Esquimaux, after the times of the Northmen, had no metals, but employed bone or stone in their stead. A VINLAND SECTION, containing a rich collection of stone antiquities,

axes, chisels, darts and arrow heads etc., partly from Massachusetts, Rhode-Island, Connecticut and Pennsylvania, and some also from Ohio; arrow heads of bronze with wooden shafts, fragments of a hauberk of the same metal, and of a belt composed of thin bronze tubes found on skeletons from the olden time at Fall River in Massachusetts (the Leifsbudir of the ancient Vinland), whereof counterparts have been found both in Denmark and in Iceland. A MEXICAN SECTION in which specimens of arrow heads made of obsidian deserve particular attention on account of their resemblance to the Northern ones of flint (see above p. 89); A CARIBBEAN SECTION, from the West Indies, containing sacred stone rings from Portorico, stone axes and quoins from the Danish Antilles. In the SOUTH AMERICAN SECTIONS are deserving of notice: sundry stone specimens from the *Brazils*, silver pincers from *Chili* perfectly resembling similar articles of bronze found here in the North, whereof one is delineated above p. 58; a collection of ancient *Peruvian* vessels.

THE CABINET OF COINS AND MEDALS, preserved in five rooms at the castle of Rosenborg, is open to the public during the summer months on Mondays from 12 to 2, and to students three times a week from 12 to 2 throughout the year. To this collection which at present possesses 50,000 coins and medals, besides 20,000 casts, considerable additions are made every year (both by excavations and by purchase), consisting partly of *antique coins*, partly of coins of the middle ages, *Byzantine*, *Oriental (Cufic)*, and *Occidental*, and partly of coins of a later date.

THE ANTIQUE CABINET, or collection of the classical antiquities of the southern countries, which though not of such an extent as to merit any particular notice, does nevertheless from time to time receive additions as well to its EGYPTIAN as to its GREEK and ROMAN SECTIONS which ought not to remain unnoticed.

THE ETHNOGRAPHICAL CABINET, which is now to be arranged in a locality assigned for that purpose consisting of 21 rooms in the building called Prindsens Palais. As a comparative study of the antiquities of various countries will doubtless throw greater light and certainty on antiquarian science in general, so may also valuable results be expected when we find the same or very similar implements and objects employed among a people in our times, who in the scale of civilization still occupy the same place as our forefathers, some of whose implements that have come down to us we are often puzzled to explain. As the utility of larger ethnographical collections in this respect as well as in others, will be obvious, so also will be the advantage which will accrue from continued reports of the additions made to this Cabinet in directing attention to the results thereby obtained in an archæological point of view.

**THE HISTORICO-ARCHÆOLOGICAL ARCHIVES** were instituted 1846 after a handsome stock had, by the continued exertions of several years, been collected to serve for a groundwork, and have now got a locality assigned to them in the palace of Christiansborg. They are composed of two principal sections, viz. an **OLD-NORTHERN-ICELANDIC**, comprising documents of a date anterior to 1450, as also collections connected with the history and archæology of the **FEROE ISLES, ICELAND, GREENLAND** and **VINLAND**, and an **ANTIQUARIAN-TOPOGRAPHICAL SECTION**, containing collections relating to Northern antiquities in general, with the historico-antiquarian topography of the Scandinavian countries in particular. This institution is yet in its infancy, and at the period of its foundation programs in Icelandic were issued to the entire body of the clergy and other individuals in Iceland, and in Danish for the purpose of being distributed throughout the other countries of Scandinavia. The **ARNÆ-MAGNÆAN COLLECTION**, which alone amounts to 2000 volumes of Icelandic or Old-Northern MSS, presents the most important materials for the labours of the Society, and with this are connected particularly the collections preserved in the first section of the Archives.

**THE LIBRARY OF THE SOCIETY** is chiefly composed of works on *philological, historical and archæological* subjects. A locality has been assigned to it in common with the Archives, adjoining to the rooms of the Museum at Christiansborg. It receives additions every year, of no inconsiderable extent, by donations of books from its Members and other wellwishers.

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Besides continuing the works already begun, the Society intends to have a new edition published of

**NOREGS KONÚNGA SÖGUR BY SNORRE STURLASON**

as well in the Old-Northern original text as in a separate Danish translation. The *Norwegian MSS Committee* lately appointed by the Society has undertaken the execution of this important task.

The preparation of another work resolved on by the Society, is in a great measure completed, and the printing now begun, viz.

**ANTIQUITÉS RUSSES ET ORIENTALES**

**D'APRÈS LES MONUMENTS HISTORIQUES DES ISLANDAIS ET DES ANCIENS SCANDINAVES**, which is to contain a collection as complete as can be made of the Scandinavian sources to the history of Russia and other eastern countries, from the earliest times to the middle of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The work will be got up in two volumes Imperial-4<sup>to</sup> with facsimiles, maps, and copperplates, in a style similar to that of the work previously published by the Society, entitled **ANTIQUITATES AMERICANÆ**.

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